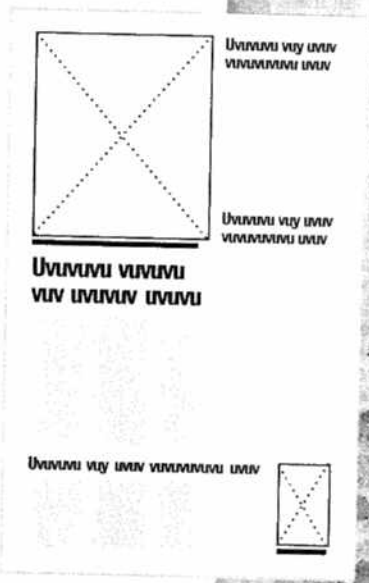
3 PAGE DESIGN

Photo 0924

Design trends come and go. What's cool today may look hopelessly lame in a decade or two (if newspapers still *exist* in a decade or two). Tastes change. Journalistic philosophies change, too.

The same goes for theories of page design. Some design experts insist that the upper-left corner is a page's prime position; thus, you should put your top story there. Others claim that the upper-*right* corner is the best-read spot on the page, and that you should put your top story *there*. Still others advise putting *strong* elements in *weak* positions (like the bottom corners) to ensure that readers will stay interested wherever their eyes wander.



Confusing, eh? Then forget what the experts say and remember this: Readers will look where you *want* them to. If you know what you're doing, you can create a page that's logical, legible and fun to read — and you can guide the readers' eyes anywhere you choose.

This chapter explores current principles of page design. Now that we've studied stories as independent units — modules — we'll begin examining ways you can stack those modules together to create attractive, well-balanced pages. (Some designers disparage modular makeup, but that issue is too complex to get into now.) Once you understand how these principles work, you can adapt them to any pages you design, whatever the style or topic.

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DRAWING A DUMMY

How can you show your colleagues, in advance, where stories will go on a page? Or what size headlines should be? Or where the photos go?

Mental telepathy? No. You draw a dummy.

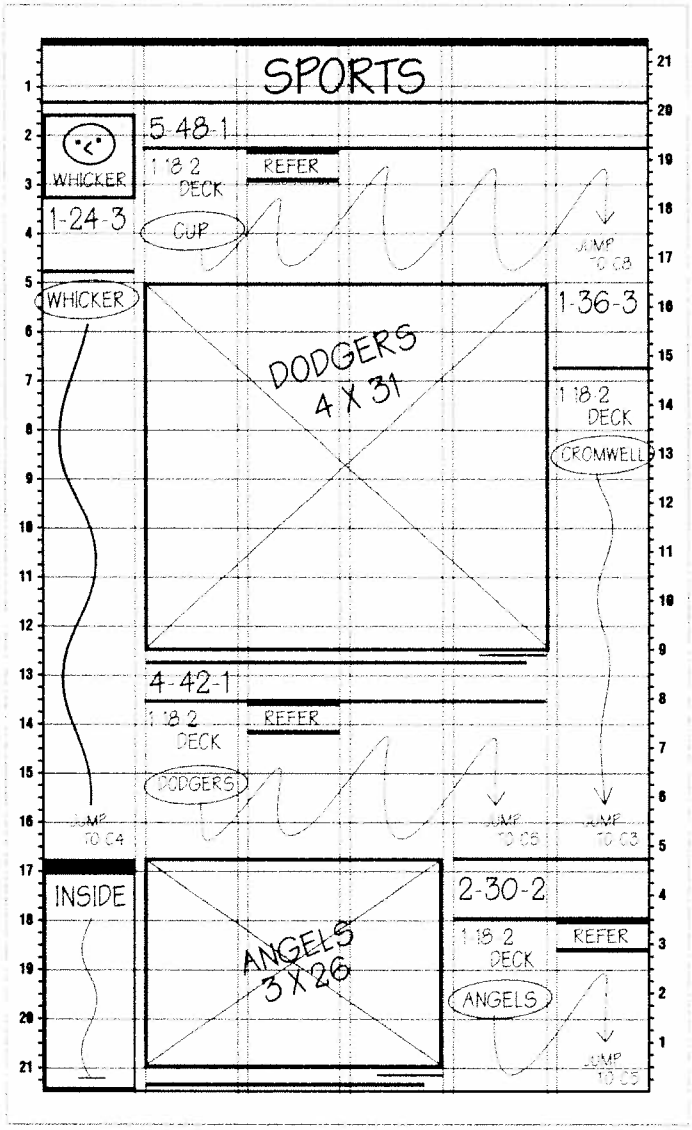
In years past, dummies were an essential step in the news production process. Editors would draw dummies, print out all the pieces — the photos, cutlines, headlines and text — then paste everything together in a composing room using the dummy as a guide. Even today, some publication designers still mark up page dummies, then give them to paginators who assemble the elements electronically.

Depending upon your newsroom, then, page dummies may range from quick thumbnail sketches to highly detailed diagrams. Either way, most dummies are drawn in pencil on paper that's smaller than the printed page, but accurately proportioned — so that, if your design calls for a thin vertical photo, it'll maintain the proper shape on the dummy.

Here's an example that shows how a typical dummy becomes a finished page.

MORE ON ▶

- **Modular design:** *Want to see how this page would look if the story elements were rearranged? Turn to page.....* **86**



This is where pages begin. An editor or designer draws a series of lines and boxes to indicate where photos, cutlines, headlines and text will go. This page is pretty simple: not too many stories or extras.

Sports
America's Cup is on for September
Judge rules US must face New Zealand
Giants nearly let Dodgers off the hook
Safety's wish is granted
Rams give Cromwell release after 11 years
Mitchell's homer sinks Dodgers
Giants break through against Fernando, 3-1
McCaskill, Angels come out on top, 2-1
He throws three-hitter to beat Stewart, A's

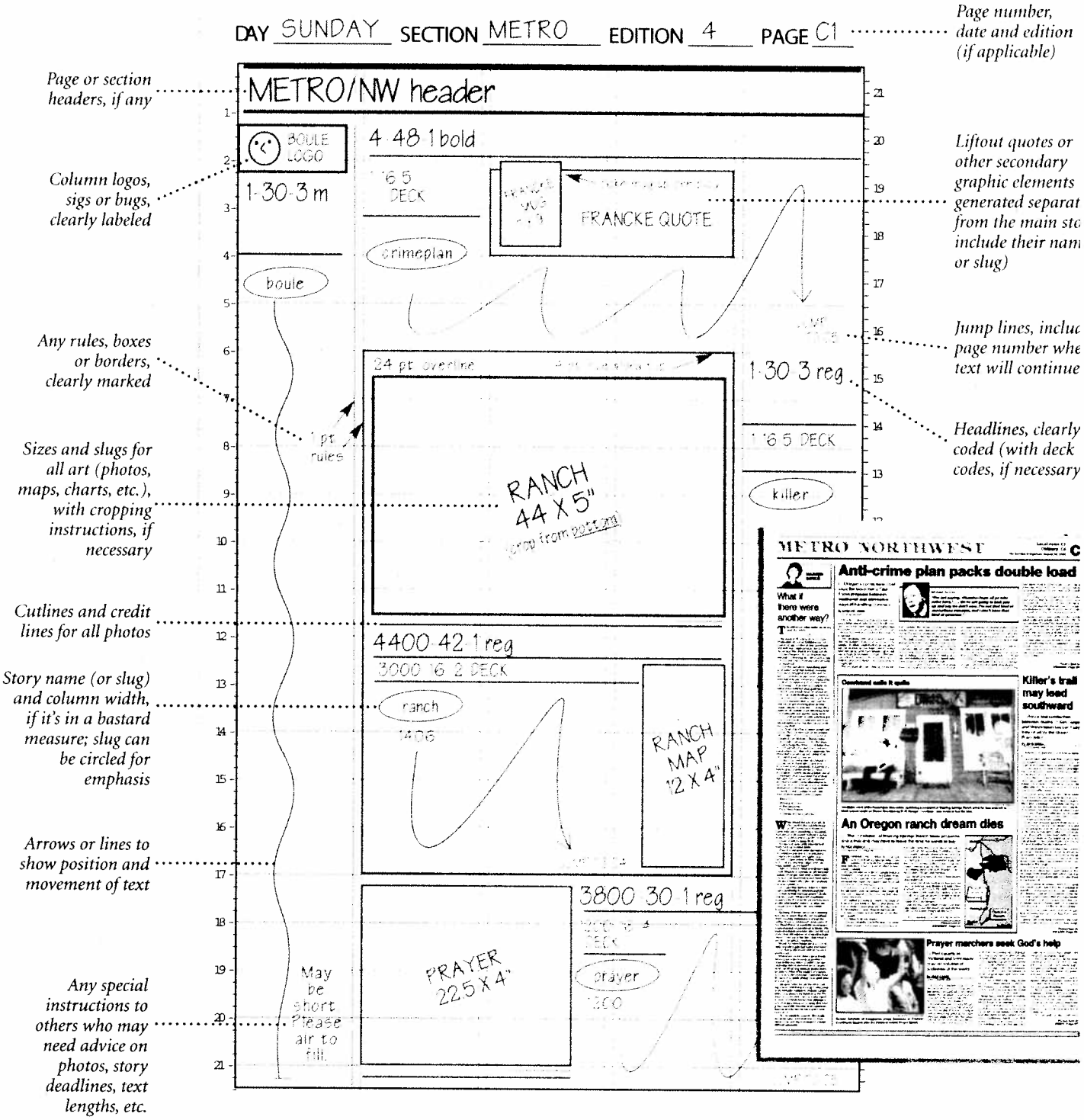
And here's how that dummy translated into print. Note how every story jumps (continues on another page). That makes the page easier to build, since text can be cut according to the diagram on the dummy.

DRAWING A DUMMY

WHAT EVERY GOOD DUMMY SHOULD SHOW

Every newspaper has its own system for drawing dummies. Some, for instance, size photos in picas. Others use inches, or a combination of picas and inches. Some papers use different colored pens for each different design element (boxes, photos, text). Some use wavy lines to indicate text, while others use arrows — or nothing at all.

Whatever the system, *make your dummies as complete and legible as you can.* Be sure that every dummy contains:


DAY SUNDAY SECTION METRO EDITION 4 PAGE C1
Page number, date and edition (if applicable)
Page or section headers, if any
METRO/NW header
Column logos, sigs or bugs, clearly labeled
BOULE LOGO
1-30-3 m
4-48 1 bold
6 5 DECK
FRANCKE QUOTE
crimeplan
boule
Liftout quotes or other secondary graphic elements generated separat from the main sto include their nam or slug)
Any rules, boxes or borders, clearly marked
Jump lines, includ page number whe text will continue
1 pt rules
24 pt overline
1-30 3 reg
6 5 DECK
killer
Headlines, clearly coded (with deck codes, if necessary
Sizes and slugs for all art (photos, maps, charts, etc.), with cropping instructions, if necessary
RANCH 44 X 5"
Cutlines and credit lines for all photos
4400 42 1 reg
3000 6 2 DECK
Story name (or slug) and column width, if it's in a bastard measure; slug can be circled for emphasis
ranch
RANCH MAP 12 X 4"
Arrows or lines to show position and movement of text
3800 30 1 reg
PRAYER 225 X 4"
prayer
Any special instructions to others who may need advice on photos, story deadlines, text lengths, etc.
May be short Please air to fill
METRO NORTHWEST
Anti-crime plan packs double load
Killer's trail may lead southward
An Oregon ranch dream dies
Prayer marchers seek God's help

GRIDS

Before you design a page, you've got to know: What *grid* does this page use? What's the underlying pattern that divides this page into columns? A page grid provides the structure — the architecture —that keeps elements evenly aligned:

3-column grid: *Often used by newsletters. Note how limited the options are for photo and text widths.*

4 columns: *A common grid for tabloids. More flexible than a 3-column grid, and the text is comfortably wide.*

5 columns: *Probably the most popular tabloid grid. It's also commonly used on broadsheet section fronts.*

6 columns: *The standard grid for broadsheets, since most ads are sold in these standard column widths.*

7 columns: *An intriguing tabloid grid. Note how that thin column is suited for sidebars, cutlines, etc.*

BROADSHEET GRIDS

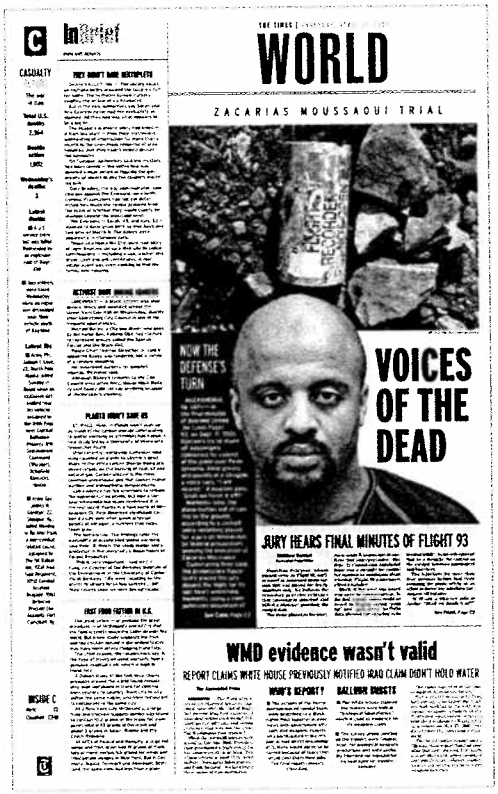
Newspapers typically come in two sizes: broadsheet and tabloid. And the larger broadsheet page provides room for bigger photos and more elaborate designs.

Most broadsheets use a 6-column grid — especially on inside pages, where ads are sold in standard widths that require columns about 11 or 12 picas wide. On open pages and section fronts, however, broadsheets may use a variety of grids:

6 columns: *At The Republican American in Waterbury, Conn., all elements align along a 6-column grid. Most broadsheet papers use this grid, particularly on their inside pages.*

Sports
Trinidad claims he chased a 'Chicken'
Beating Bears nothing new for Holmgren
49ers take a pounding but deliver the last shot
For O'Neal, it's a season of promise
Third time the charm for Dunleavy?

10 columns: *Until recently, The Oregonian used a 10-column grid on most section fronts, which helped standardize the sizes of those narrow liftout quotes, mug shots and graphic extras.*



12 columns: *The Beaver County Times in Pennsylvania uses a 12-column grid to keep complex page designs organized. From left to right, the column widths are 1-3-2-2-2-2.*

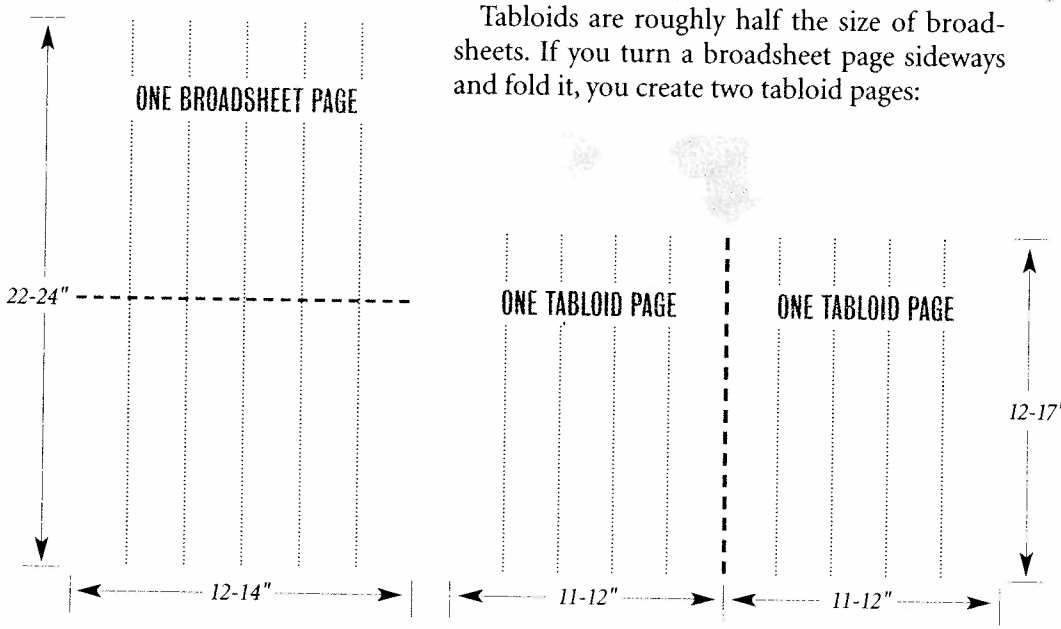
GRIDS

TABLOID GRIDS

Though large-circulation dailies are usually broadsheets, many other papers — including weeklies, student newspapers and special-interest journals — prefer the advantages of the tabloid format. Why?

- Their smaller size makes tabs easier to produce and cheaper to print.
- Editors and advertisers find that their stories and ads can dominate a page more effectively than in a broadsheet.
- They're popular with readers: handier, less bulky, faster to scan and browse.

Tabloids are roughly half the size of broadsheets. If you turn a broadsheet page sideways and fold it, you create two tabloid pages:



A typical tabloid page is roughly half the size of a broadsheet page. Exact measurements vary from printer to printer, but these are common current dimensions for tabloid and broadsheet paper sizes.

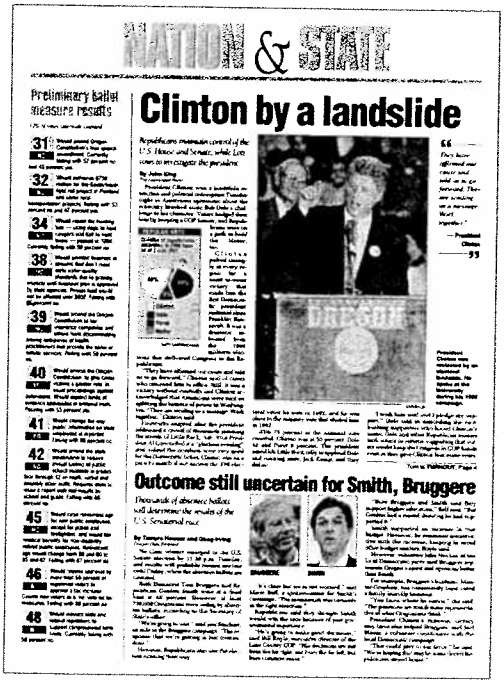
As the cost of newsprint has continued to rise, many publishers have incrementally reduced the size of their newspapers. That's why it's difficult to establish one universal, standard size for broadsheets and tabloid pages.

MORE ON

- **Berliners:** *A new size, halfway between tabs and broadsheets, that's part of the industry's current downsizing trend* **13**
- **Special grids:** *How some grids help you display graphic extras* **198**

Though a 5-column format is most common in tabloids, some papers have successfully used 7-, 8-, even 9-column grids. That's a 9-column grid in the Langara College student paper (below left). And what looks like a 4-column format in the Oregon Daily Emerald (below right) is actually an 8-column grid.

Lifestyles
Snakes conquer plane, Internet
Students turn to trendy tea
New specialty blends offer a healthy alternative to coffee
Pho Hoeng a cheap choice for hungry Langara lunchers
Students say college is good place to form new friendships
News and features
Girls don't just wanna have fun
Workers seek safe settings
Rap goes scholastic
Canadian professor digs language of the streets
To pay or not to pay: the debate around downloads



PAGES WITHOUT ART

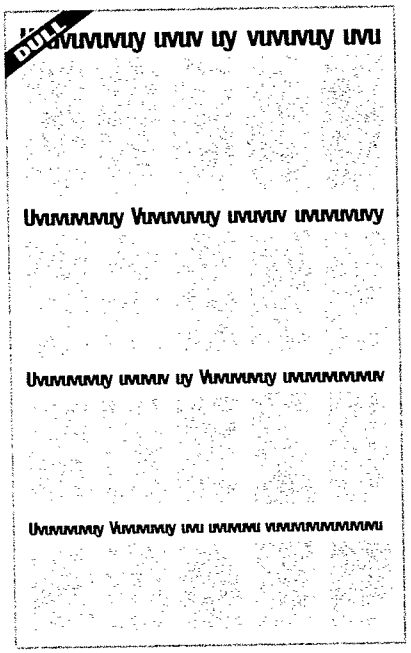
NOTE

Some of you work with tabloids. Some of you work with broadsheets. As a compromise, the examples in this chapter — like the one below — will use 5 columns (as most tabloids do) but will assume the shape and depth of broadsheet pages.

Until now, we've looked at different ways of designing *stories.* Now, we're ready to design *pages.* And a well-designed page is really nothing more than a neatly organized stack of stories. Sounds simple, right?

So we'll start simply. With just text — no photos. That way, you'll see that, with or without art, you build a page by fitting rectangles together as logically as you can.

In the old days, editors designed pages by stacking stories side by side in deep vertical rows. Today, the trend is more horizontal, and it's possible to build pages in wide horizontal rows like the example below. Though its design is simple, this page *does* get the job done:



This page design is simple — a bit dull, actually — but it still observes some basic design principles:

Story placement: *The strongest story goes at the top of the page. By "strong," we're referring to news value, impact or appeal. As you move down the page, stories become less significant.*

Headline sizing: *Page position dictates headline size. The lead story will have the biggest headline; headlines then get smaller as you move down the page.*

Story shapes: *As we've learned, stories should be shaped like rectangles. And here, you can see how keeping stories rectangular keeps pages neat and well-organized. Whether stories are stacked vertically or horizontally, whether they use art or not, that principle always applies on open, ad-free pages like this. (Later, when we look at pages with ads, you'll see it's not always this easy to keep stories rectangular.)*

The design of this page is clean, but its impact on readers is probably weak. Why? It's too gray. Too monotonous. There's nothing to catch our eye. The only contrast comes from the headlines.

On a perfect page, every story would have some kind of art: a photo, a chart, a map or — at the very least — a liftout quote. In reality, however, actually *producing* all those extras would take a colossal amount of time and might look pretty chaotic.

A better rule of thumb is this: *Make every page at least one-third art.* In other words, when you add up all the photos, graphics and display type on a page, they should occupy at least a third of the total real estate. Some pages should use even more art than that (sports and feature section fronts, for instance).

There are times, however, when photos just don't materialize. When there are no quotes to lift. When there's no time — or no artist — to add a chart or graph. Your page may be gray, but it doesn't have to be dull. Instead of simply stacking stories in rows (as in the example above), you can add variety by:

- **Butting headlines.**
- **Boxing stories.**
- **Using bastard measures.**
- **Using raw wraps and alternative headline treatments.**

In the pages ahead, we'll see how these techniques work on pages without art.

MORE ON

- **Headlines and headline sizes:** *A quick guide for both broadsheet and tabloid* **29**
- **Designing pages with art:** *Guidelines for adding photos to gray pages like this one* **84**
- **Inside pages:** *Creating modular designs, working with ads* **98**

PAGES WITHOUT ART

BUTTING HEADLINES

TOM MIX DIES IN CRASH

Troy Tops Illini 13-7; Texans Beat Bruins 7-0

115,000 to Join Pontifical Mass for Peace Today

Cleric Leaders Aiding Papal Envoy in Coliseum

KIMBROUGHS DRIVE GAINS EARLY SCORE

TROY ATTACK IN 3D PERIOD DOWNS ZUPPKE

Western Film Hero Killed in Arizona

Hitler Warned By Greece; Nazis Seize Bucharest

U-Boats Stage Battle With British Navy

Europe Conflict Moving to Egypt

Axis Plans Check of British in Mediterranean

Troops March in Triumph to Balkan Capital

MORE ON ▶

- **Headlines:** *Fonts, sizes and number of lines* **29**
- **Butting heads:** *How to avoid them by using photos and raw wraps* **85**

Nobody likes ugly heads. But it took newspapers years to figure out how to slap headlines onto every story without jamming them into a chaotic jumble. Until the 1960s, most newspapers ran vertical rules in the gutters between stories. When their headlines stacked alongside each other, they looked like tombstones (hence the term *tombstoning*, another name for butting heads).

For years, the First Commandment of Page Design has been: *Don't butt heads.* That's good advice. Butt-headed design can cause confusion like this:

President Bush meets Frisbee title-holder Castro in Miami Beach to challenge record

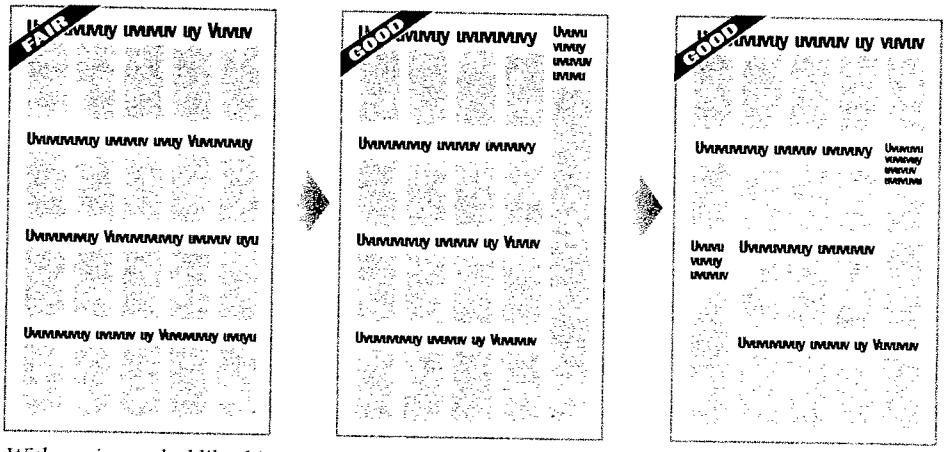
By Robin Fox/ The Times

By John Hamlin/ The Times

Occasionally, though, you'll need to park two stories alongside each other, and when you do, their heads may butt. To minimize the problem:

◆ **Mix styles, fonts or sizes.** The idea here is: If headlines must butt, make them dissimilar. If one's boldface, make the other light or italic. If one's a large, 1-line horizontal, make the other a small, 3-line vertical.

◆ **Write short.** Let a little air separate the two headlines. That usually means writing the headline on the left a few counts short, just to be safe.



With stories stacked like this — in wide horizontal layers — you're not forced to butt any headlines. But should we add a vertical shape to break up the monotony?

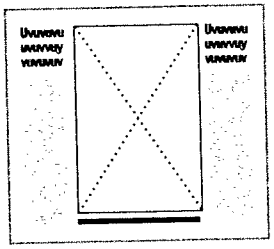
Now the top two headlines butt a bit. But the one on the left is bigger (by at least 12 points) and it's written short. The page now has a vertical element to relieve the tedium.

Here, two different pairs of headlines butt. But some would say the page now has more motion, more interesting shapes. By bending the rules, we've added variety.

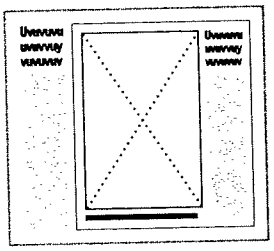
PAGES WITHOUT ART

BOXING STORIES

Another way to break up monotonous gray page patterns is by boxing stories. As we saw on page 67, putting a box around a story (with a photo) is one way to avoid confusing readers with ambiguous designs:



Which story does this photo belong to? Hard to tell. You'd have to scan the text and the cutline to figure it out.

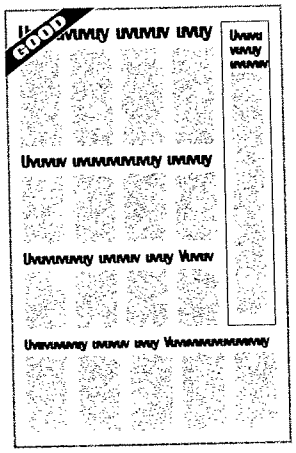


If you draw a box around the story and its photo, you join them into one package — and avoid confusing readers.

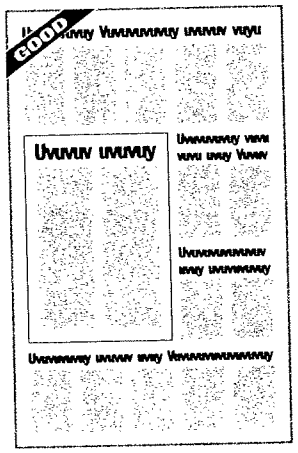
Boxing a story also gives it visual emphasis. It's a way of saying to the reader, "This story is *different* from the others. It's *special.*"

Don't box a story just because you're bored with a page and want to snazz it up. Instead, save boxes for stories that deserve special treatment:

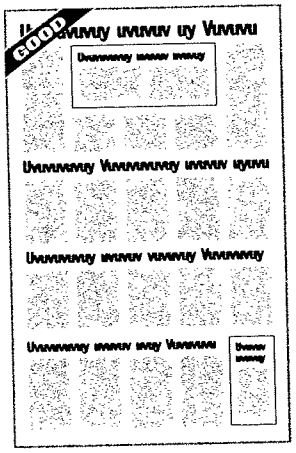
- A light feature on a page full of hard news.
- Small sidebars attached to bigger stories.
- Standing columns (news briefs, opinion, etc.) that appear regularly.
- Stories with risky or complicated designs whose elements might otherwise collide with other stories and confuse readers.



*Boxing this deep vertical story breaks up the monotony of the page and says to the reader, "This story is different." Give this treatment, then, **only** to special stories or columns.*



Here, we've created the effect of two lead stories on one page: one across the top and one that's boxed. See how these story shapes move your eye around the page?



At the top, we've boxed the lead story's sidebar — and it's obvious that the two stories work together as a unit. At the bottom, we've given a graphic nudge to a small feature.

MEASURING COLUMN WIDTHS INSIDE BOXES

To figure out how wide legs of text will be when you put a story in a box:

1. **Measure** the width of the box (in picas).
2. **Decide** how many legs of text there will be.
3. **Subtract** 1 pica for each gutter inside the box (including the two gutters on the outer edges).

and finally,

4. **Divide** by the number of legs.

MORE ON

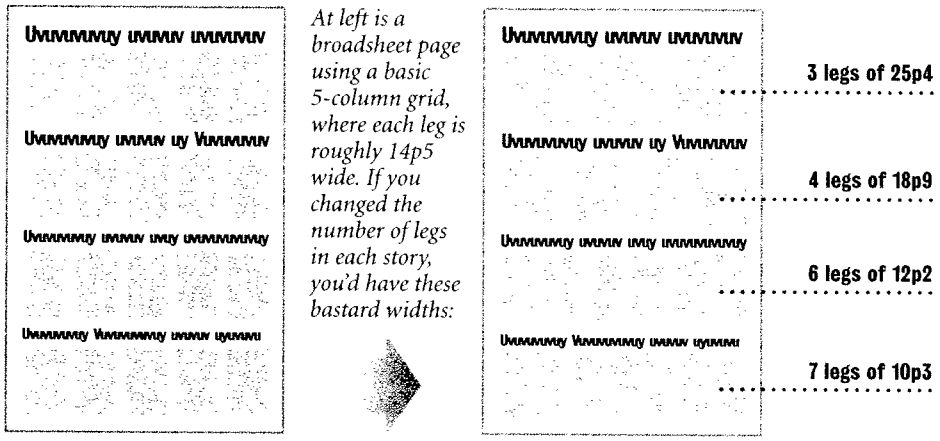
- **Bad juxtapositions:** *How they happen, and how to avoid them* **102**
- **Rules and boxes:** *Where (and where not) to use them* **155**

PAGES WITHOUT ART

BASTARD COLUMN MEASURES

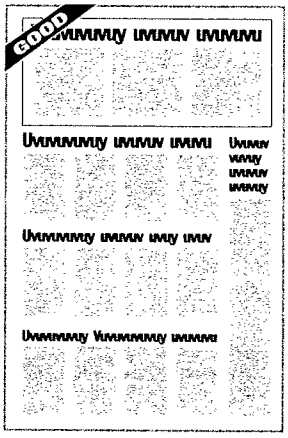
OK, stop snickering. Bastard measures are *serious* design options. And they're handy, too — especially when you need extra flexibility in sizing photos. (More on this later.)

As we've seen, most publications use a fixed number of columns on each page. But bastard measures let you deviate from the standard text width:

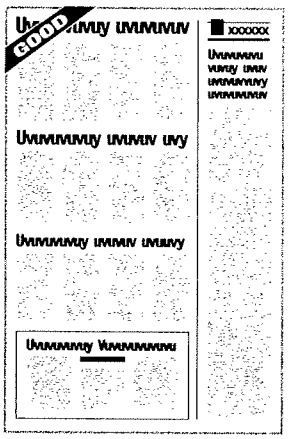


At left is a broadsheet page using a basic 5-column grid, where each leg is roughly 14p5 wide. If you changed the number of legs in each story, you'd have these bastard widths:

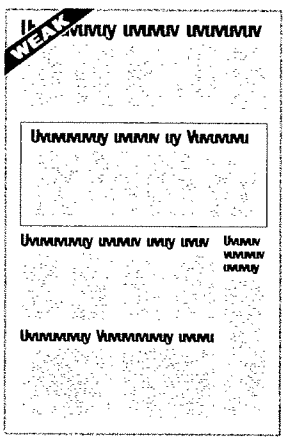
Bastard measures add graphic emphasis to a story by freeing it from the rigid page grid. (In the above left example, see how the columns and gutters align in a strict vertical pattern?) Changing column widths is a subtle but effective way to show that a story is special or different:



A good combination: a box with a bastard measure. This adds emphasis to the lead story and helps set it apart. The page is orderly and the relative news value of each story is clear.



A wider measure can enhance a columnist (right column) or other special story (bottom). Note, too, how the column rule helps separate that right column from the other stories.



Too many bastard measures can get confusing. Why create two competing lead stories? Why run that bottom story in wide legs? In short: Don't ignore your basic page grid.

Bastard measures alter the grid patterns on a page — which can be either good (relieving monotony) or bad (creating chaos). Some papers don't allow any bastard measures; others allow them only when a story is boxed. So remember to use the proper amount of restraint.

A warning about something that should be obvious by now: *Don't change column widths within a story.* Widths may change from story to story and from page to page, but once you start a story in a certain measure, each leg of that story on that page should stay the same width. No cheating.

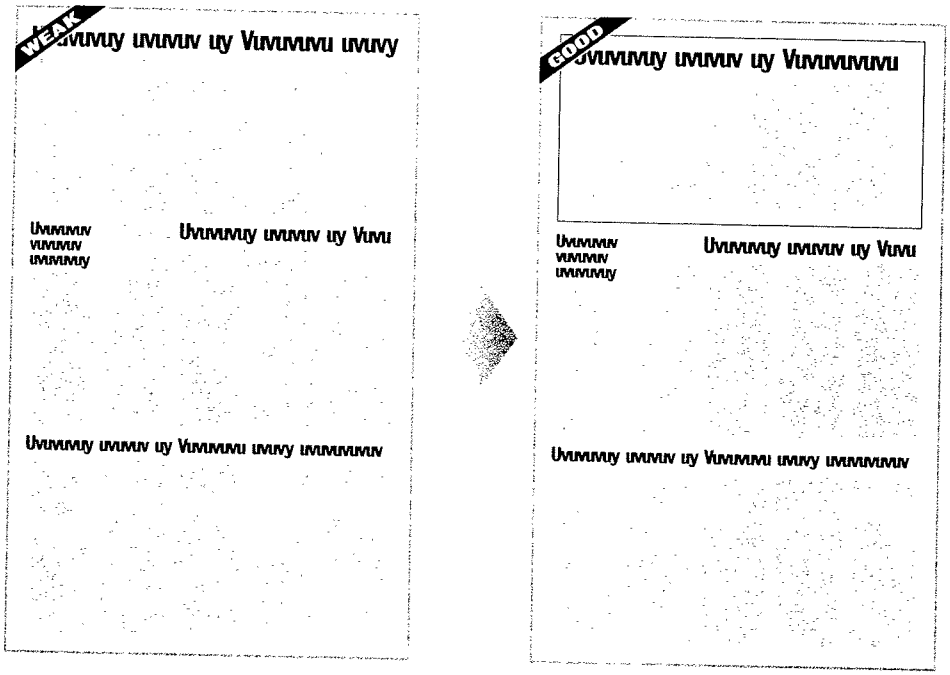
MORE ON

Bastard measures: *How they add extra flexibility in sizing photos* **97**

PAGES WITHOUT ART

USING RAW WRAPS

Raw wraps let you park two stories side by side without butting their headlines. But use raw wraps with caution. They work only at the top of a page, beneath a boxed story, or below some sort of cutoff rule. Otherwise, as you can see, they'll collide with other columns of text and confuse your readers:



Here's that typical photo-less page again. You can see how that raw-wrapped headline adds variety to the story shapes. But see how the second leg of that raw-wrapped story collides with the text above it? That's the danger of raw-wrapping stories in the middle of the page.

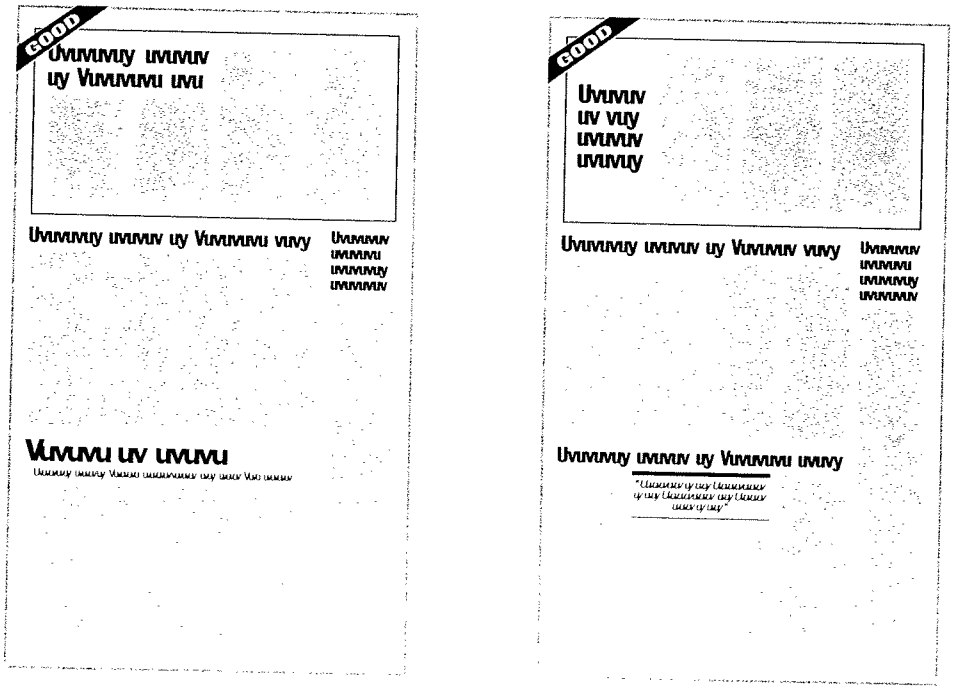
*A better combination. Here, the lead story is boxed in a bastard measure. That gives it extra emphasis and staggers the column alignment, making it unlikely that readers will be misdirected. You **could** box the raw-wrapped story instead, but remember: Save boxes for stories whose content is special. Don't use boxes to salvage weak designs.*

MORE ON ➧

- **Types of headlines:** *A summary of non-standard options.....* **28**
- **Raw wraps:** *How to use them to keep headlines from butting.....* **85**

OPTIONAL HEADLINE TREATMENTS

No one ever said that all headlines have to look the same. Adding variety to your headlines can add oomph to your page designs. But don't overdo it. Save special headline treatments for special stories. If you use too many offbeat headlines on a page, their styles may clash and create distraction.

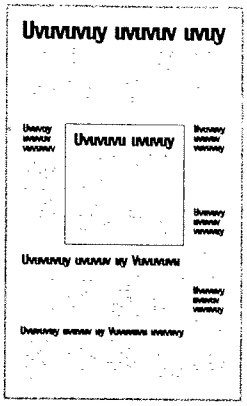


At the top of the page: a raw-wrap headline inside a boxed story (in bastard measure). Some papers raw-wrap headlines at the top of the page simply to avoid an excess of long, 1-line banner heads. Below, a hammer head (with deck) gives extra impact to a special analysis or feature story.

At the top of the page: a sidesaddle headline. Like raw wraps, these must be used carefully to avoid collisions between legs of different stories. Note, too, that if the story's legs are too deep, the headline will float in too much white space. At the bottom of the page, a liftout quote lures readers as it breaks up the gray text.

PAGES WITHOUT ART

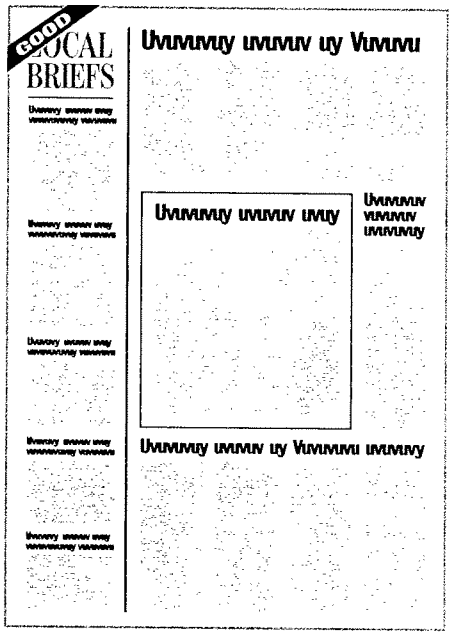
A BETTER SOLUTION: SMARTER PACKAGING



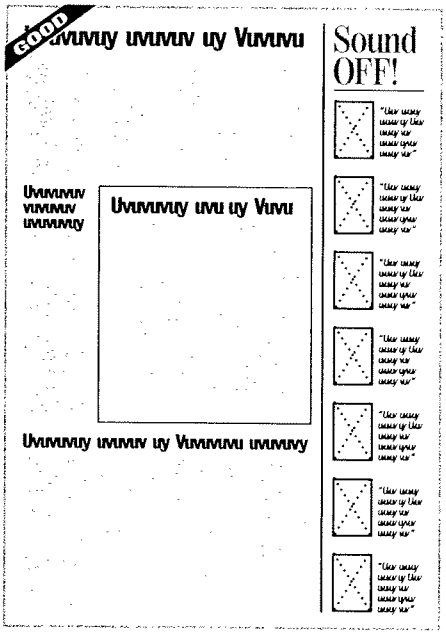
If your pages consistently look like the one at left — a gray hodgepodge crowded with short stories — you need more photographers. But you also may need to start packaging short, related items into special formats.

The advantages:

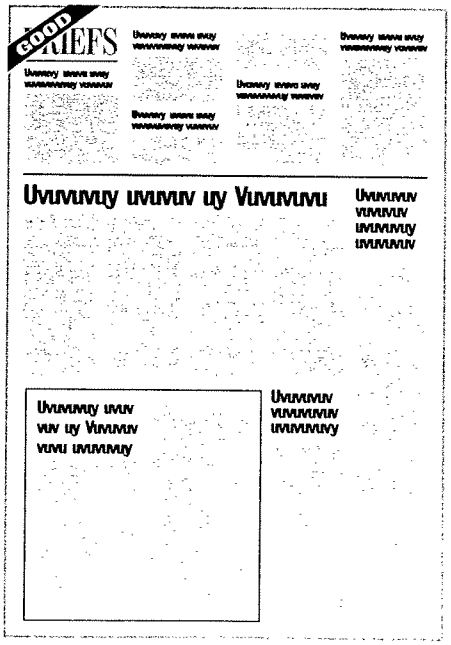
- Instead of scattering news briefs or calendar listings throughout the paper, you anchor them in one spot. That's a smarter, cleaner solution.
- You create more impact for your main stories by keeping those smaller ones out of their way.
- You appeal to reader habit, since most of us prefer finding material in the same spot every issue.



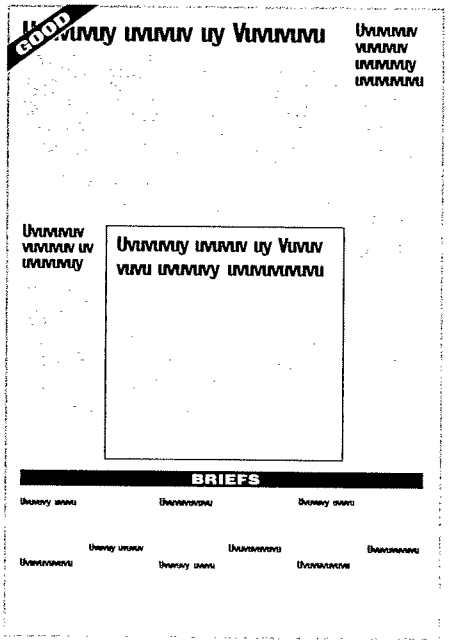
"Roundup" packages of briefs usually run down the left-hand side of the page. By stacking briefs vertically, it's easier to add or cut material to fit precisely. Note how this column runs in a wider measure, separated from the rest of the page by a cutoff rule. A box would also work well to isolate these briefs.



By flopping the page design at far left, we can see how the page looks when you run a special column down the right-hand side. Here, a "man-in-the-street" interview uses mugs and quotes to anchor and enliven an otherwise gray page.



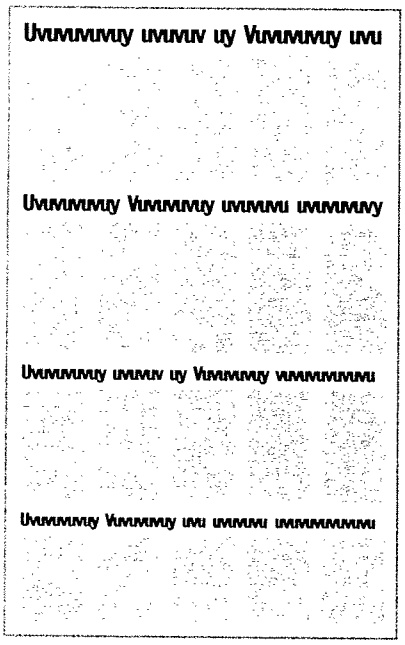
Some papers run news roundups horizontally across the top of the page, though the text often wraps awkwardly from one leg to another. Note the raw wrap at the bottom of the page. This is how it looks when you box a raw-wrapped story (in bastard measure) below another story. Is that solution acceptable?



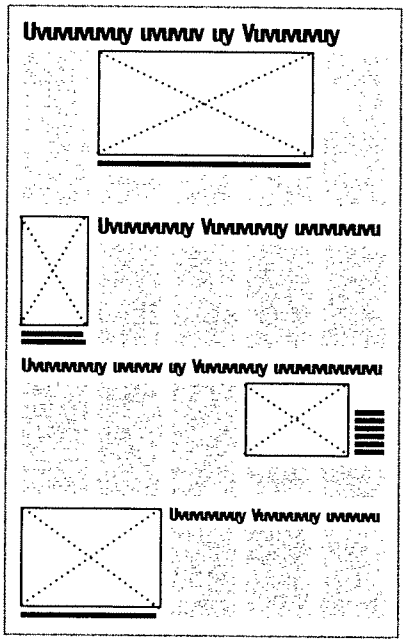
Here's how a roundup column looks when it's stripped across the bottom of the page. Again, the biggest drawback is the awkwardness of wrapping short paragraphs from one leg to the next. In this example, a black bar labels the column and separates it from the rest of the page.

PAGES WITH ART

As a page designer, your job isn't just drawing lines, stacking stories and keeping everything from colliding. It's *selling* stories to readers. People won't eat food that looks unappetizing; they won't swallow news that looks unappetizing, either. And that's why you gotta have art.



Here's that gray page again. Sure, it's clean, well-ordered, packed with information. But it's dull. Lifeless. Nothing grabs your attention. The stories may be wonderful, but they may never get read.



Here's that same page, with art. There's less room for text now, so stories must either be shortened or else jump to another page. But it's worth it.

Remember, most readers browse pages until something compels them to stop. By adding photos, maps or charts, you catch their interest — then deliver the information.

Art is essential. And informational art — art that's informative, not simply decorative — plays an integral part in news design. Adding art to your pages:

- Supplements *textual* information with *visual* information.
- Adds motion, emotion and personality that's missing in text alone.
- Attracts readers who might otherwise ignore gray type.
- Increases the design options for each page.

GUIDELINES FOR PAGES WITH ART

When you add art to a page, you enhance its appeal. You also increase the risk of clutter and confusion. So go slowly at first. Once you feel comfortable adding art to stories, keep adding it. It's (arguably) better to make a page too dynamic than too dull. As one veteran newspaper designer put it: "I like to take a page right to the edge of confusion, then back off a bit."

A dizzying number of possibilities — and pitfalls — await when you design full pages, so it pays to remember these guidelines:

- **Keep all story shapes rectangular.** You've heard this a dozen times. But it's the key to successful modular design.
- **Vary your shapes and sizes** (of stories as well as art). Avoid falling into a rut where everything's square. Or vertical. Or horizontal. Or where all the stories are 10 inches long. Give readers a variety of text and photo shapes.
- **Emphasize what's important.** Play up your big stories, your big photos. Place them where they count. Let *play* and *placement* reflect each story's significance as you guide readers through the page.

In the next section, we'll look more closely at three crucial guidelines:

- **Give each page a dominant image.**
- **Balance and scatter your art.**
- **Beware of butting headlines.**

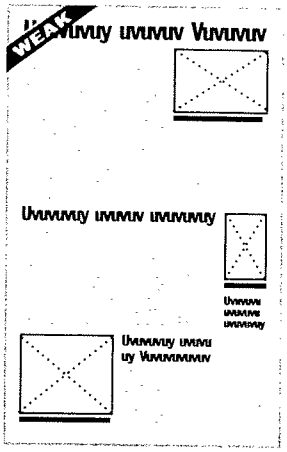
PAGES WITH ART

GIVE EACH PAGE A DOMINANT IMAGE

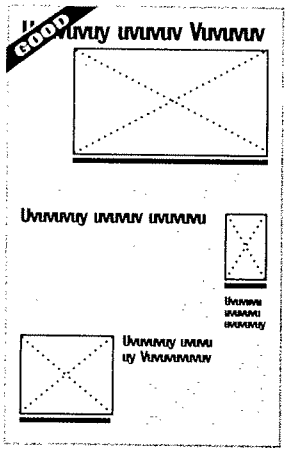
Most beginning page designers run art too small. As a result, pages look weak and meek.

So be bold. Run your best art big. And when you use two or more photos on a page, remember that one of them should dominate.

Even if there's only *one* photo on a page, it should run big enough to provide impact and interest — to visually anchor the page.



Here's a page where no photo dominates. As a result, it looks text-heavy and unexciting.

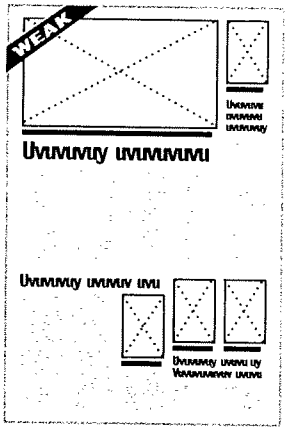


Here, that top photo is two columns wider — and now it dominates a dynamic page.

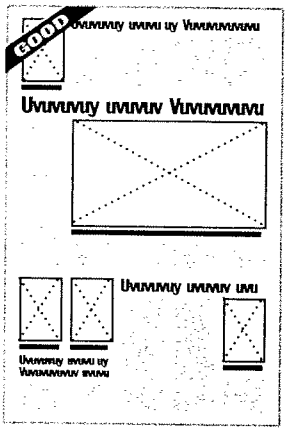
BALANCE & SCATTER YOUR ART

Use photos to anchor your pages, but remember to balance and separate your art, too. When photos start stacking up and colliding, you get a page that's:

- **confusing,** as unrelated art distracts us and intrudes into stories where it doesn't belong. *Or:*
- **lopsided,** as photos clump together in one part of the page and text collects in another.



This layout seems to pair the lead photo and top mug, as well as the three mugs below. It's confusing and top-heavy.

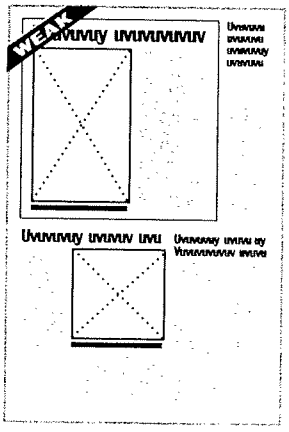


Smarter photo placement avoids collision or confusion. The page is better-balanced when the art's apart.

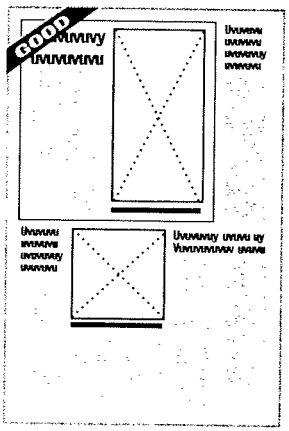
BEWARE OF BUTTING HEADLINES

We've seen how you can bump heads (carefully) when you *need* to. But on most well-designed pages, head butts are unnecessary. Clumsy. And confusing to readers.

Instead, think ahead. Rather than butting headlines, use art to separate stories. In many cases, that's where raw-wrapped headlines offer a smart alternative to a crowded page.



With two sets of butting headlines, this page is clumsy and confusing. But if you use the photos to separate stories. . .



. . . it's a much cleaner layout. Notice how the raw wrap (bottom left) makes it easy to run two stories side by side.

MODULAR PAGE DESIGN

We've mentioned the term *modular design* before. And as you begin designing full pages, the idea of treating stories as modules — as discrete rectangular units — gains new meaning.

Take a moment to examine the sports page below. Notice how every story is a rectangular module. Then study how all those modules fit together to form a well-balanced, well-organized page.

C Section — The Orange County Register — Tuesday, July 26, 1988

Sports

MARK WHICKER

Giants nearly let Dodgers off the hook

SAN FRANCISCO — In it happens that the Dodgers don't always win when they score one run, don't always beat a right-handed pitcher, don't always win road games, don't always bail out Fernando Valenzuela, and don't always get the guy loose in the top of the ninth.

Almost, but not always.

Down 2-1 and thankful it wasn't 6-1, Los Angeles conspired to get black-counter Alfredo Griffin to second base, with one out left, and next Mike Davis at the plate. Kelly Downs of the Giants threw him a 3-1 split-fingered and Davis swung and the ball jumped to right field and ...

"My heart stopped for a minute," Downs said.

But Candy Maldonado, streaking the warning track, made the catch, and the Dodgers are now 2-10 on the road against right-handed starters and 11-4 in two-run decisions. They're also 3½ games ahead of Houston and six ahead of the defending National League West champions, with a double-header tonight.

The Giants are a little more realistic than Angels manager Cookie Rojas, who was quoted as saying he'd be happy with beating Oakland two out of three this week. That would leave California a smug 12 games out. Then again, the Giants are just coming off a pennant and know what that entails.

Manager Roger Craig, who played Gerald Ford to Al Rosen as such a string of preseason guarantees as to make Pat Riley look dispassionate, said this 97th game of the campaign was absolutely critical. "Let's face it," he said. "We need three out of four or four out of four. But we've stayed close enough that, if they do that, we can win."

Still, the Giants must question the dynamics at work here. They missed the consistent Downs (138 innings, 366 hits) at such a desperate Valenzuela that he's fiddling with the stirrups on his socks and recovering his glasses in the fifth inning. Yet their wind-sniffing body shots kept missing.

In the second, Mike Aldrete got loose up and picked off when Bob Melvin apparently missed a hit-and-run. In the third Aldrete snapped a bases-loaded liner right at Kirk Gibson, who caught it. In the first Gibson didn't catch a much easier assault, and in the sixth John Shelby bicked away a single, but both of them recovered to throw out Giants — Shelby relaying to Sax to Mike Scioscia blocking the plate, with Donell Nixon's sliding hand fastening itself to Scioscia's shin guard as perfectly as a key goes into a lock.

"We kept letting Fernando off the hook," Downs said. "I can't think about that, as a pitcher, but it was in the back of my mind."

Please see WHICKER/4

America's Cup is on for September

Judge rules US must face New Zealand

■ PART OF THE TEAM: Randy Smyth is hoping to play a part in a successful America's Cup defense/6

From staff, news-service reports

Competitors in the embattled America's Cup race will set sail in September, a New York judge ruled Monday.

State Supreme Court Justice Ostrom B. Cipperick ordered in New York City that the leading San Diego Yacht Club and Michael Fay's New Zealand challenger begin racing Sept. 19 off the coast of San Diego. However, the date, which conflicts with the 1988 Summer Olympics in Seoul, South Korea (Sept. 17-Oct. 1), might be moved to Sept. 3.

The ruling also cleared the way for the San Diego club to use its controversial two-hulled 60-foot catamaran in defense of the title it reclaimed for the United States in 1987. New Zealand will race a 132-foot carbon-fiber hull sloop that measures 90 feet at the waterline and has a 36-story mast.

In San Diego, Tom Ehman, executive vice president of Sail America, the organization managing the defense for the yacht club, said his group was "very pleased because this gives certainty to the event."

"As the judge said at the end of her decision, 'Let's get the sailors back on the water,' " Ehman said. "That's the bottom line."

Fay, chairman of the New Zealand challenge, still maintained that the Americans have an unfair advantage sailing their catamaran against his single-hull sloop. He said multihulls are inherently faster than monohulls in steadier conditions, but that he would go through with the race anyway.

"The judge hasn't decided anything," Fay said in a hastily organized news conference Monday in San Diego. "If she was convinced a multihull should be raced in the America's Cup, she would have said so."

The judge did not rule on whether San Diego could use its catamaran, but also ordered both sides to proceed with the competition and bring any complaints to court when the race was over.

"Nothing in this decision should be interpreted as indicating that multihulled boats are either permitted or barred under the American's Cup Deed of Gift," the judge said.

Fay said his Mercury Bay Club will protest the race and file an appeal after the race begins. If the catamaran is declared illegal by the courts, San Diego could face a forfeit if it wins the race.

"We will go out and race to win," Fay said. "We were here to race, and we would like to win on the water. A monohull doesn't beat a multihull on the water, but that's what we'll try to do."

Dennis Conner, skipper of the Stars and Stripes defender, said he doesn't like the San Diego Yacht Club and Fay can "forget the old wounds."

"Both parties have erred in this race," Conner said. "It is not a one-sided deal."

Please see AMERICA'S CUP/6

Catcher Mike Scioscia stops the Giants' Donell Nixon from scoring with a body block, but the Dodgers couldn't stop San Francisco, leading, 3-1.

The Associated Press

Safety's wish is granted

Rams give Cromwell release after 11 years

By Glen Bastmeier
The Register

FULLERTON — The Nolan Cromwell era officially came to an end Monday as the Rams announced they had released their veteran safety by mutual agreement.

Owner Georgia Frontiere, in a prepared statement, called Cromwell "a true inspiration who will be sorely missed."

"Nolan is loved by his teammates and followers of the game," Frontiere said.

"He is a model of integrity and character. Nolan is the quintessential Ram. He has a thorough knowledge of the game and unequaled athletic ability. I consider him a close friend and hope he will always be affiliated with the Rams."

The Rams have offered a one-year position as assistant coach to Cromwell, who asked to be released so he can look for a team willing to let him compete for a starting job.

"If I can't find one," he said Sunday night, "I'll probably retire."

Seattle could be such a team, but Seahawks coach Chuck Knox — who was entering his final season with the team when they made Cromwell their second-round draft choice in 1977 — said Monday that he doesn't know yet if they're interested.

Rams coach John Robinson said he could see some team giving the 33-year-old Cromwell the opportunity he seeks, under the right conditions.

"I think a lot of those things depend on injury," Robinson said.

"I think if somebody starts playing preseason games and has two, three injuries in the secondary, then all of a sudden the veteran looks good. Then Fox came in here and helped us for a period of time. Nolan, I think, would be of value to somebody in that kind of light."

Cromwell, who was unable to adjust to his new role as a defensive non-starter, played 11 seasons for the Rams, going to the Pro Bowl four straight times from 1980-83.

The former Kansas quarterback finished his Rams career as the team's all-time leader in interceptions.

Please see CROMWELL/3

Mitchell's homer sinks Dodgers

Giants break through against Fernando, 3-1

■ GRIFFIN: Shortstop is activated and utilityman Mike Sharperson is sent down/6

By Tom Keegan
The Register

SAN FRANCISCO — The concentrated drought of the Dodgers' light-out pitcher and top-notched hitter dropped on Monday night.

Once again, Fernando Valenzuela pitched but didn't win, running his winless streak to seven starts. And once again, Dodgers manager Tommy Lasorda had to fill out a lineup card that excluded Pedro Guerrero.

Valenzuela (3-8), winless since June 16, worked out of what seemed like more than the Lakers threw down in average practice. But he ultimately was outpitched by Kelly Downs.

Consequently, the San Francisco Giants won the first of a four-game series at Candlestick Park, 3-1, in front of 29,842 live witnesses and a national television audience.

Downs (10-8) went the distance, allowing five hits. He struck out eight, walked two and became the winning pitcher, thanks to third baseman Kevin Mitchell's clubbing, two-run homer to left-center with one out in the seventh.

Valenzuela, who worked out of bases-loaded jams twice, pitched seven innings, allowing nine hits, three runs and five walks, and striking out three.

"He made a bad pitch to Mitchell, but he pitched well enough to win," Lasorda said. "We just didn't get enough hits."

Downs says to that. Guerrero, who is 7 for 14 with one career homer against Downs, wasn't around to do anything about it.

The Dodgers had hoped he might be back for the series, but Guerrero, who played Saturday and Sunday at Albuquerque on an injury-rehabilitation assignment, woke up "sore" Monday morning, according to General Manager Fred Claire. It was a spring-training type of soreness from not having played since June 4, and it kept Guerrero out of the lineup Monday at Albuquerque.

"It didn't sound to me like he will be back tomorrow," said teammate and friend Mario Soto, who spoke with Guerrero shortly before the game. "But you never know. He might surprise us. Wouldn't that be something if he walked in

Please see DODGERS/6

Third baseman Jack Howell fails to stop Jose Canseco's fine drive in the Angels' 2-1 victory over Oakland.

Chris Carlson/The Register

McCaskill, Angels come out on top, 2-1

He throws three-hitter to beat Stewart, A's

■ ANGELS FOCUS: Wing pitcher Mike Witt declares himself fit and will start tonight's game/6

By Peter Schmuck
The Register

ANAHEIM — It is a showdown only in the Angels, who have been waiting a long time for another chance to go one-on-one with the first-place Oakland A's. But it was a showcase for back pitchers, who went at the series opener as if the division title hung in the balance.

Right-hander Kirk McCaskill, suddenly one of the hottest pitchers in baseball, threw a three-hitter Monday night to defeat Dave Stewart and the A's, 2-1, before 30,928 spectators at Anaheim Stadium.

"That might have been his best performance of the year right there," said Angels manager Cookie Rojas, "and the other guy didn't pitch too bad, too."

Stewart went all the way for the A's and gave up five hits. The game was decided on a run-scoring double by Wally Joyner in the fourth inning. From that point on, both starters combined to give up just two hits.

"These are the games pitchers look for," said McCaskill. "You want to be able to go out there and pitch like that. It feels good to be in a groove and know that you can put the ball where you want to."

He has been doing that with some consistency the past six weeks, winning six straight decisions to improve to 6-5. In July, he is 4-0 with a 2.31 ERA. Quite a turnaround since the Jose 11 loss that dropped his record to 2-5.

Please see ANGELS/6

INSIDE

Irvine bandage Paul Gonzales scores a unanimous decision over Javier Diaz in a flyweight bout/2

Starting over? Quarterback Jim Plunkett, at age 40, is optimistic about his fate with the Raiders/3

Jets sign Cadigan Ex-USC lineman Dave Cadigan agrees to a four-year, $2 million deal with New York/3

The AL East New York overtakes Detroit for first place; Boston, behind Roger Clemens, wins 12th in a row/4

Double duty! Several jockeys will commute between Del Mar and Los Alamitos race courses to ride at both tracks/4

DC Tennis Classic Jimmy Connors beats Andrew Gomez in straight sets, his first singles title since 1984/7

Sports Today/2 — The NFL/3
Breakdown/6 — Sports Etc./7
The SportsLine, (714) 953-7722

MODULAR PAGE DESIGN

Could that page have been assembled differently — or better? Let's rearrange the modules to see how other options might have turned out:

WEAK
Sports
America's Cup is on for September
Giants nearly let Dodgers off the hook
Safety's wish is granted
Mitchell's homer sinks Dodgers
McCaskill, Angels come out on top, 2-1

The problem: two thin vertical stories side by side, their heads nearly butting. That's a weak juxtaposition, though the rest of the page is OK.

FAIR
Sports
Safety's wish is granted
Giants nearly let Dodgers off the hook
Mitchell's homer sinks Dodgers
America's Cup is on for September
McCaskill, Angels come out on top, 2-1

Move the dominant photo all the way to the top and you get two gray text blocks dulling things up in the middle of the page. Otherwise, it's OK.

GOOD
Sports
Safety's wish is granted
Giants nearly let Dodgers off the hook
Mitchell's homer sinks Dodgers
McCaskill, Angels come out on top, 2-1
America's Cup is on for September

To break up that gray (example at left), move that bottom story up, then dummy the America's Cup story at the bottom. A good balance.

WEAK
Sports
McCaskill, Angels come out on top, 2-1
Giants nearly let Dodgers off the hook
Safety's wish is granted
Mitchell's homer sinks Dodgers
America's Cup is on for September

Could that small photo run at the top of the page? Well, not like this. The two photos collide, and now there's no art at all downpage.

FAIR
Sports
McCaskill, Angels come out on top, 2-1
Giants nearly let Dodgers off the hook
America's Cup is on for September
Safety's wish is granted
Mitchell's homer sinks Dodgers

Here, we lead with the smaller photo. Does this design feel odd? Usually, big photos play better when they're placed near the top of the page.

GOOD
Sports
America's Cup is on for September
Giants nearly let Dodgers off the hook
Safety's wish is granted
Mitchell's homer sinks Dodgers
McCaskill, Angels come out on top, 2-1

*A mirror image of the original. Nothing wrong with it, but columnists traditionally run down the **left** side of the page. Does that matter to you?*

FRONT PAGE DESIGN

Every paper's news philosophy is most visibly reflected on Page One: in the play of photos, the styles of headlines, the variety of graphics, the number of stories.

Here are a few current examples of broadsheet Page One design. Study them closely. Have they observed the design principles we've discussed?

MORE ON

- **Page One design:** *Current trends and philosophies*..... **7**

KATRINA: THE STORM WE'VE ALWAYS FEARED

The Times-Picayune

CATASTROPHIC

STORM SURGE SWAMPS 9TH WARD, ST. BERNARD

LAKEVIEW LEVEE BREACH THREATENS TO INUNDATE CITY

Flooding wipes out two communities

After the mighty storm came the rising water

When disaster strikes, Page One reflects the magnitude of events with big headlines and big photos, as the page focuses exclusively on the Big Story. That's what we see here, in the first edition produced by The Times-Picayune as Hurricane Katrina began flooding New Orleans in 2005. This edition was produced as a PDF and posted online after the newspaper's offices were flooded.

A PERFECT THANKSGIVING

TRULY 'DEJA VU' – BEEN THERE, SEEN THAT

San Francisco Chronicle

Historians' gobble squabble

Comcast to boost TV bills 6 percent starting in January

ORCHARD THIEVES

Beirut assassination roils U.S.-backed government

Iconic director set standard for independent filmmaking

Go

That Hurricane Katrina page was produced in a hurry: a simple layout with no fancy frills. Here's a front page, by comparison, where artistic touches are added to nearly every story module. Note the use of color screens, the photo cutouts and crops, the treatment of that centerpiece headline. Rules and color boxes separate all the modules here, so the page stays cleanly organized. Is all this color appealing — or did the designer overdo it?

NATIONAL POST

BLAIR: 'WE WILL NOT BE TERRORIZED'

'We were just waiting to die'

Here's another big breaking news story. After terrorists bombed a London subway in 2005, Toronto's National Post played the story this way. The layout is purely symmetrical (even the headline is centered). The low-resolution photo, taken by a passenger's cell phone, adds a gritty realism to the page. And the black background puts you down in the darkened subway tunnel. A clever touch — or is it too distracting and difficult to read?

RepublicanAmerican

HUGE UPSET

This time it's deadly

Worker killed in city's latest underground explosion

Ex-judge likes rule on providing information

State police suspect no foul play after body found in Thomaston

Gay marriage supporters, opponents lobby lawmakers

First, notice how the 6-column grid works on this page: Four columns are devoted to news, with that 2-column leg of briefs running down the left side. But today that briefs column is interrupted by the extrawide 6-column photo that accompanies (and runs below) the lead story. Does this non-modular deviation add fresh impact to the layout — or is it just a design gimmick that will confuse readers?

FLOW CHART: SECTION FRONT DESIGN

START HERE:

Do you know how many stories you have? Their lengths? Their relative importance to each other? Do you have a lead story?

NO → Find out. You must have all the pieces of the puzzle before you can begin designing. Get a complete list. Talk to the editor about what's most newsworthy. *Now* do you know?

NO → Hey, are you giving me a hard time, or what? You *sure* you want to design this page? You've got yourself backed into a corner here. Don't panic. Take a deep breath. Back up and start over.

YES ↓

Have you gathered all the art for this page (photos, mugs, charts, maps, etc.)? Do you know what *must* run, and what's optional?

NO ← YES

NO ↑

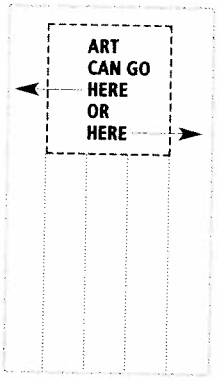
YES ↓

Have you chosen your dominant art for the page (either a single photo or a multi-element package that works as a unit)?

NO → Uh-oh. You need dominant art. You don't want a gray, wimpy-looking page, do you? Examine each story's graphic potential. Is there a photo you can shoot or recycle? Can you draw a chart or graph? Create a list? Compile some quotes? *Anything?*

NO → Do you have any wild art: a photo that can stand alone and anchor the page (a moody portrait, a landscape, some sports action)? Can a photographer quickly shoot something — either wild art or a news event? Or can you lift a photo from elsewhere in the paper and play it big on Page One, then refer readers inside to the actual story?

YES ↓ YES ← YES



Anchor your dominant art near the top of the page. Play it *big.*

Consider where the text will go. And the headline. And any secondary photos or sidebars. Try several options. You may need to jump the text if it's long.

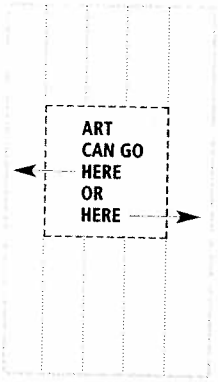
If there's no text: You're using a stand-alone photo here. That's fine, but leave room for a lead story near the top of the page. Try moving your dominant art down, or over toward one side, to give the lead story good play.

Imagine where your other stories might go downpage. Do you have any photos or art for those other stories?

NO ↓

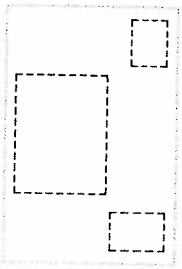
No other art, eh? Could be an awfully gray page. Can you add a mug shot (with a quote) to one of your smaller stories? Or run a small stand-alone photo somewhere else on the page (near the bottom)?
(If "yes," go back to the previous box.)

If there's no art for secondary stories, you'll need to get maximum mileage from your dominant art. Try placing it down toward the middle of the page; then dummy your remaining stories above, below or alongside it. Keep experimenting until everything seems to fit.



YES, LOTS ↓

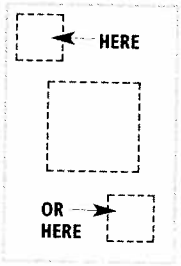
Scatter your art toward the edges so the photos won't collide with each other. Try moving your lead art down toward the middle of the page, or to one side, so it won't butt against other art. Vary the shapes and sizes:



Now finish dummying the rest of your page. Satisfied?

JUST ONE ↓

Decide how much play you want to give that secondary story with art. If it's a strong story, try running it across the top of the page, above the dominant art. If not, try anchoring it near a bottom corner.



Now finish dummying the rest of your page. Satisfied?

YES ↓

Ask yourself: Is every story as reader-friendly as it can be? Can you make stories more appealing or break up long hunks of text with:

- **Sidebars?** Run a list of key points or upcoming events. Or collect quotes from notable authorities on this topic. Or create a quick profile box about a key person in a story.
- **Graphics?** If a story focuses on statistics or dollars, explain those numbers in a chart or a graph. If location plays a key part of the story, add a map.
- **Quotes?** Don't keep good quotes buried in the text. Lift them out and give them emphasis.

YES →

FINAL CHECKLIST

- Are stories in the right order? Is it obvious which is most important?
- Does the page offer a mix of news and features, heavy and light topics?
- Are all stories shaped like rectangles?
- Do any headlines butt?
- Do any stories need decks to add information?
- Does all art face the story it accompanies? Does any photo intrude into a neighboring story?
- Would boxing a story help separate it from its neighbor or add emphasis?
- Can everyone actually *follow* this page design?

YES ← YES

DESIGNING PAGE ONE: A CASE STUDY

Now that we've explored all the different elements that come into play when you build a page, let's build one — or better yet, let's take a front-row seat and watch a talented page designer at work.

Jim Haag, who works at The Virginian-Pilot in Norfolk, Va., finds nothing as scary as a blank page — "except maybe a world without really good bacon," he says. Here, in his own words, he takes us through his process to create what he calls a fairly typical page at a newspaper known for its atypical fronts.

"At the Pilot," Haag says, "designers are expected to be journalists who develop presentations that leave no doubt what the lead story is. There's no more exciting job in the world. A two-column, 60-point lead head won't do." So what will?

JIM HAAG

1 ITEMIZING THE STORY ELEMENTS

The lead story: *This is the latest development in our biggest local story of the year: the fight to keep a naval air base in Virginia Beach. The base is the largest employer in the city, and a federal panel has indicated that it may be moved because Virginia Beach has allowed homes and businesses to encroach upon the facility. The state of Florida is trying to woo the base, and officials there have insisted that no homes are in the potential crash site of their proposed location.*

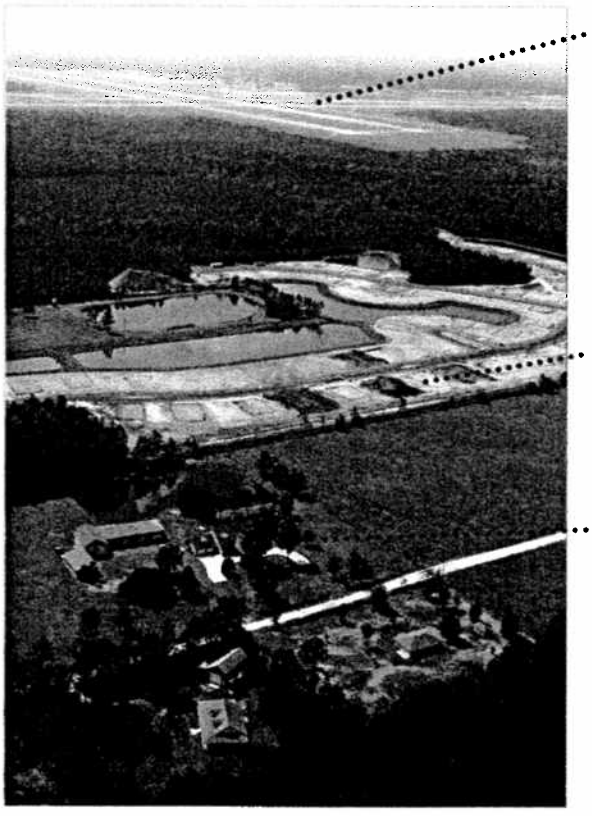
But today, the Jacksonville newspaper ran a story saying that 925 homes were, in fact, in the crash zone. That could severely hurt Florida's chances of landing the base and could keep thousands of jobs here. We're doing our own story.

The lead photo: *There's a shot from the Jacksonville paper (below) that shows development sprouting up near the closed military base that Florida hopes to reopen. Many file photos of our local base and local naval aircraft are available, but we've used them countless times. Today we have an actual storytelling image.*

Other stories on the budget:

- **FOOTBALL** — a feature story looks at a local high school football player who is considered one of the top prospects in the country and who is drawing sellout crowds.
- **PIT BULL FOLO*** — A local follow-up provides more details on a tragic story about a 2-year-old who had been killed the day before by the family's pit bull.
- **KATRINA FOLO** — A wire story examines the efforts to save artwork damaged in New Orleans by Hurricane Katrina.
- **NEW NICKEL** — Another wire story discusses the new design for the nickel, which features one of Virginia's favorite sons, Thomas Jefferson.
- **PROMOS** — Baseball playoffs, Sandra Day O'Connor gets a post at a local college, and two upcoming stories later in the week.

*A *folo* is newsroom slang for a *follow-up story,* a story supplying new details about an event that's previously been covered.



The base: *The former Cecil Field near Jacksonville closed in 1999. Officials hoping to reopen the base had insisted that Cecil would be a better location than Virginia Beach for the Navy's air base because there's no development in the crash zone there.*

Under construction: *The photo shows homes being built near the base, which goes against the official line spouted by state authorities.*

Existing homes: *In the foreground, a neighborhood is clearly visible.*

DESIGNING PAGE ONE: A CASE STUDY

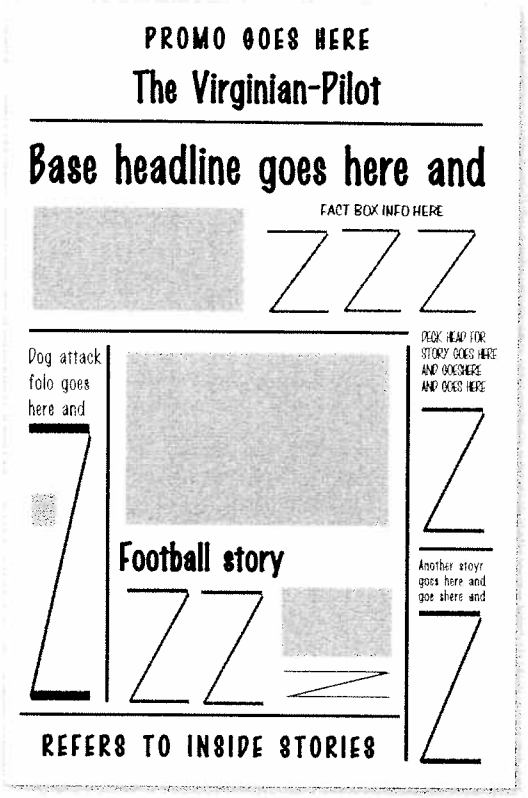
2 DRAWING UP A PRELIMINARY PLAN

The end product might not always show it, but I start each day with a plan. Here's a dummy outlining what I think today's page will look like.

Some days, the dummies are conceived in my head. Other times, I sketch versions on paper. But they're always somewhere, and I'm always revising them. I often go outside to do my initial dummies. Sitting at the computer, it's too easy to grab the mouse and start moving shapes around when I really should be thinking.

With three strong local stories today, the trick will be making the lead story dominant without shortchanging the other two. My idea for the base story is to crop the photo into a horizontal shape and place display type that analyzes the story to its right. The story will dogleg into the righthand column, a hallmark of Pilot design. It's a technique that allows us to give the lead story a large presence without stripping the text across six columns and taking up too much space at the top of the page.

Below it will be the piece on the Jefferson nickel. The football story will run in the center; I'm planning for two photos – one of the fans and one of the player – though I haven't seen them yet. On the left will be the dog attack story. It's doubtful the Katrina story will fit onto the page.


PROMO GOES HERE
The Virginian-Pilot
Base headline goes here and
FACT BOX INFO HERE
Dog attack folo goes here and
PEEK HEAD FOR STORY GOES HERE AND GOESHERE AND GOES HERE
Football story
Another story goes here and goe shere and
REFERS TO INSIDE STORIES

3 CONDUCTING RESEARCH

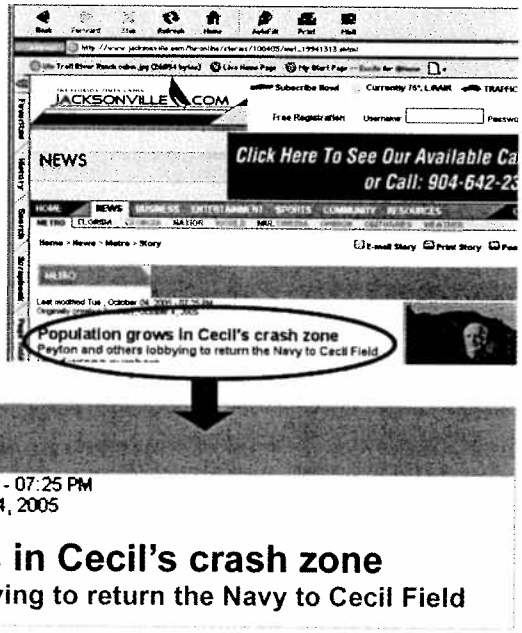
I start each page with a working headline. Sometimes, the words last through the night and stare at me the next morning. Other times, copy editors gracefully improve them.

Either way, it's important to begin with a real headline because the words often dictate the look of the page. That can't happen if all you see is "DUMMY HEAD GOES HERE."

If you start with the big words, they can set the tone for the presentation and help focus your ideas. The design will often flow out of the words, which I always find easier than later trying to fit the proper headlines into a design.

So where do the words come from? I start by reading the lead story. That's easy if it's from the wires; usually some version of it has been written. If it's local, I search for a work in progress. Not finding that, I scour the budget line for ideas.

But on this day, neither a story nor a budget line exists, so I'm left to my own devices. I head to the Web and check out the Jacksonville newspaper's version of the story. I begin to think of what the headline might say.


JACKSONVILLE.COM
NEWS
Click Here To See Our Available Ca
or Call: 904-642-23
Population grows in Cecil's crash zone
Peyton and others lobbying to return the Navy to Cecil Field
METRO
Last modified Tue., October 04, 2005 - 07:25 PM
Originally created Tuesday, October 4, 2005
Population grows in Cecil's crash zone
Peyton and others lobbying to return the Navy to Cecil Field
used wrong numbers

It's hard to imagine the days before the Internet. I use the Web often when I'm writing my lead headline. I find it faster searching online for stories than on the wire. Today, the Jacksonville newspaper's Web site saves me by giving me the first glimpse of what our story might say.

DESIGNING PAGE ONE: A CASE STUDY

4

WRITING (AND REWRITING) THE HEADLINE

The headline, Part I: *I've been working for 50 minutes now, and I'm a little worried that the page is still blank. But I have a workable plan and a good idea of what the lead story will say, so I consider it time well spent and begin the actual design.*

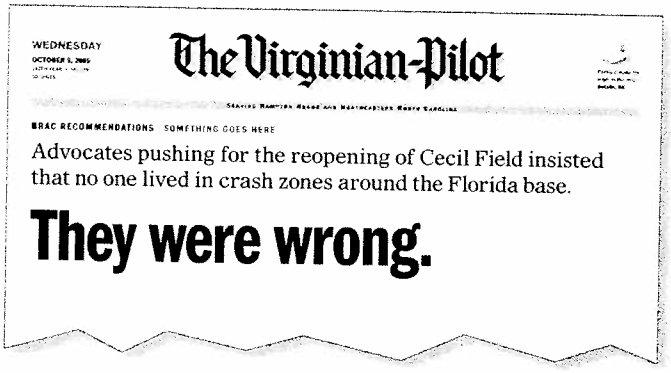
I leave room for an as-yet-undetermined promo above the flag. And I write my first words. They tell the story, but they have a high "duh factor."

The headline, Part II: *It's going to be difficult to tell this story in just a few words. To take some of the pressure off the main head, I add a label above it to provide additional information. I rework the big words.*

This version has more punch, but I worry about the word "lied." Will the story support it? If not, will I have locked the copy desk into difficult headline specs?

The headline, Part III: *Because of the story's complexity, I decide the headline needs a lead-in — some words that set the tone for what is to follow. This approach works with stories that can't be summed up in four or five words.*

I write the lead-in and the main head, and I like the words in the biggest type: "They were wrong." This has punch and, for now, it's a keeper.


WEDNESDAY
The Virginian-Pilot
BRAC RECOMMENDATIONS SOMETHING GOES HERE
Advocates pushing for the reopening of Cecil Field insisted that no one lived in crash zones around the Florida base.
They were wrong.

Adding the lead photo: *I place the image onto the page and discuss possible crops with the photo editor. It becomes apparent that the photo can't be cropped into a horizontal shape without losing vital information – either the base near the top of the photo or the neighborhood in the foreground. So much for my plan.*

But how can I deal with a vertical shape? The image has to run large enough that readers can see the important parts of the photo — at least two columns wide. But if I use it under the lead-in and six-column headline, the lead package will eat up almost half of the page. I'm not sure I can give it that much real estate without pinching the other stories.

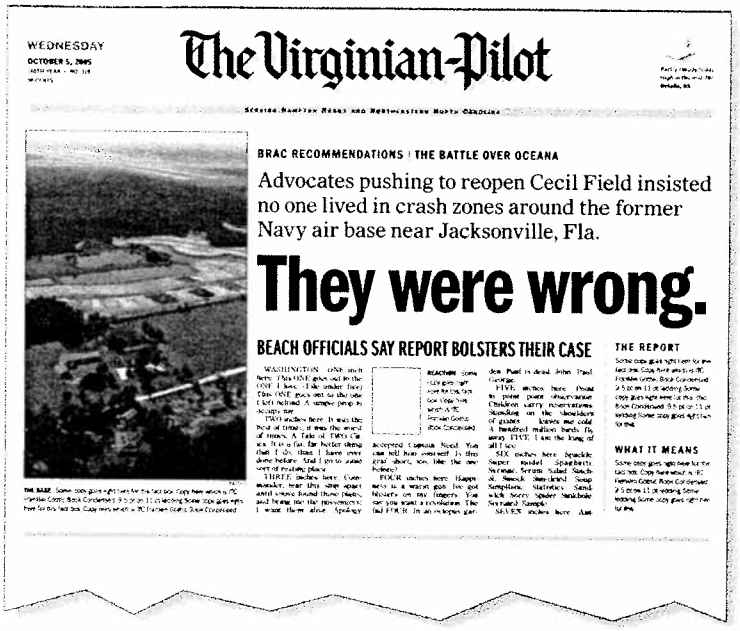
WEDNESDAY
The Virginian-Pilot
BRAC RECOMMENDATIONS SOMETHING GOES HERE
Advocates pushing for the reopening of Cecil Field insisted that no one lived in crash zones around the Florida base.
They were wrong.

DESIGNING PAGE ONE: A CASE STUDY

5 FINESSING THE LEAD PACKAGE

By moving the photo to the top of the page and the headlines to the right, the package begins to take shape. The image isn't the easiest read but, at two columns, the key elements are visible.

I add space for a mug shot in the text to add a human touch. This could be a local official, such as the mayor, or a Florida official. I'll have to wait and see. I place two blocks of fact-box material to the right of the text to add details about the story. I label them "The Report" and "What It Means," and I will write them after the story has been turned in. To add a little punch, I use red to highlight key words in the label and fact box.



WEDNESDAY
OCTOBER 5, 2005

The Virginian-Pilot

BRAC RECOMMENDATIONS | THE BATTLE OVER OCEANA

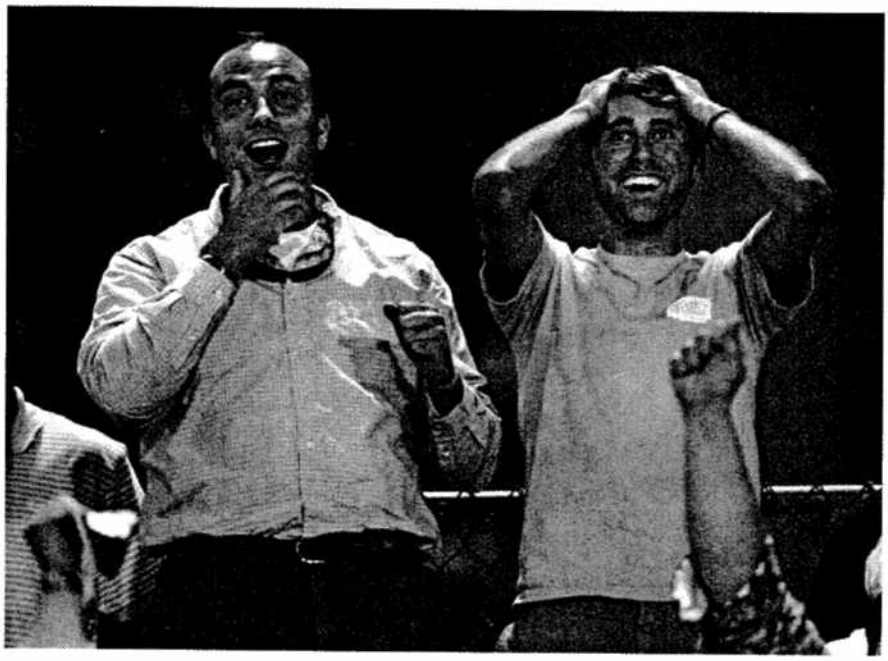
Advocates pushing to reopen Cecil Field insisted no one lived in crash zones around the former Navy air base near Jacksonville, Fla.

They were wrong.

BEACH OFFICIALS SAY REPORT BOLSTERS THEIR CASE

THE REPORT

WHAT IT MEANS



6 EVALUATING THE PHOTOS FOR THOSE OTHER STORIES

The photo editor shows me the two best shots for the football feature – a nice image of two fans who can't believe what they're seeing and an action photo of the hot-shot player. The story centers on the crowds, so it's obvious that the fan photo is the best of these options. The facial expressions are great, but the image needs some size for full impact. I'll also need to show the player who is creating all the stir, but that photo can run as secondary art.

There is also a mug shot of the child killed by the dog, and though I plan to use it, it needn't run large.

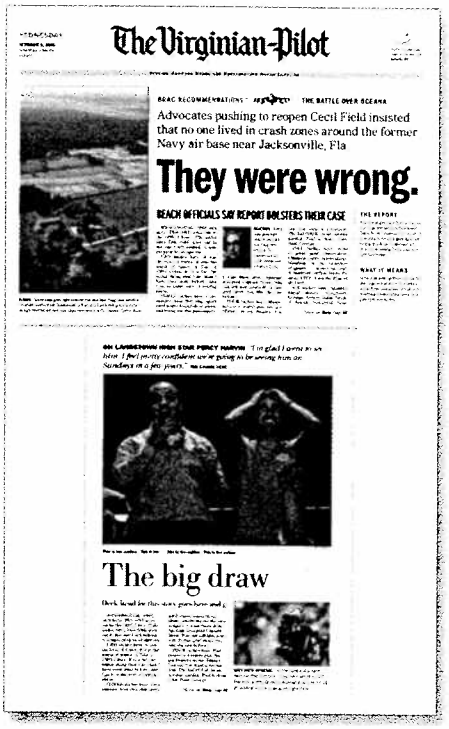
A wire photo shows the design of the new nickel, and it screams to be cut out.

At this point, the Katrina story and its art are off my radar.

DESIGNING PAGE ONE: A CASE STUDY

7 DESIGNING THE OTHER ELEMENTS

With the lead story already designed, my attention turns to the bottom of the page. I want to give the football feature adequate space, but that still leaves two stories and a bunch of promotional material. The nickel story offers some hope, in that it can be cut down to a short item and thus free up room for everything else. It's time to get going.


The Virginian-Pilot
Advocates pushing to reopen Cecil Field insisted that no one lived in crash zones around the former Navy air base near Jacksonville, Fla
They were wrong.
BEACH OFFICIALS SAY REPORT BOLSTERS THEIR CASE
The big draw

I begin with the football player feature. I use the photo of the fans large but add white space around the layout to let it breathe. The cutline tells me that they drove from out of state to see the football star, and this enhances the image's storytelling value. I use the image of the player small, with an extended cutline that tells readers why he's such an attraction. I use a pullout quote above the large photo to set the scene and type in "The big draw" as my first-draft headline.

This is working for me.

I've added a few other touches to the lead package: I've placed a mug shot of the Virginia Beach mayor in the story, though it still isn't written and I don't know if she will be quoted. And I've added a small cutout of a jet to the label because it gets to the heart of the story and because — well, it looks cool.

GET THE BOOT!
The Virginian-Pilot
Advocates pushing to reopen Cecil Field insisted that no one lived in crash zones around the former Navy air base near Jacksonville, Fla
They were wrong.
BEACH OFFICIALS SAY REPORT BOLSTERS THEIR CASE
Head goes here and goes here and goes he
The big draw

I revisit the football feature and swap the photos, putting the player on top. I like this relationship between the two images. I keep the quote next to the small photo, but I fear the typography is too repetitive of the lead story, with small type leading into big type. I'll have to think about this.

I fill in the page with the rest of the stories. The dog attack piece goes on the left, and I use the boy's photo with it. On the right, I run a hold-to-the-front item about the new nickel, and I let the coin jut into the lead package. I like how it looks. Below the Jefferson story, I leave room for two refers to stories inside and two stories coming up later in the week.

I then go to work on the above-the-flag promo. For some reason, I use pink type today. I've never done that before.

GET THE BOOT!
The Virginian-Pilot
Advocates pushing to reopen Cecil Field insisted no one lived in crash zones around the former Navy air base near Jacksonville, Fla.
They were wrong.
BEACH OFFICIALS SAY REPORT BOLSTERS THEIR CASE
Head goes here and goes here and goes he
The big draw

I go back to my original football design, and this is the page I show at our 6:30 p.m. meeting, where editors get their first chance to offer comments about the page. They like the lead presentation but have issues with the bottom of the page. With the feature, they want the football player's photo on top.

I explain my rationale for where I've placed it, but they're not buying it.

They also want the dog attack story on the right side of the page; they consider this a more newsy spot. I think readers will look where you lead them and, in this case, the nickel is more visually interesting than the photo of the boy, so I think it will attract more attention than the dog attack story regardless of where it is on the page.

DESIGNING PAGE ONE: A CASE STUDY

8 EVALUATING THE FINAL PAGE

I make the recommended adjustments but use a large headline at the top of the football story to avoid the problem of too many small lead-ins on the page. My initial lead headline holds up. Overall, I'm satisfied. But if I could do it all over again:

GET THE SCOOP
THE WESTERN TREND IS BACK. HOW TO GET THE PERFECT FIT. | THE DAILY BREAK
WEDNESDAY
OCTOBER 5, 2005
The Virginian-Pilot
BRAC RECOMMENDATIONS
THE BATTLE OVER OCEANA
Advocates pushing to relocate jets from Oceana Naval Air Station in Virginia Beach to Cecil Field insisted that no one lived in crash zones around the Florida facility.
They were wrong.
VA. OFFICIALS SAY REPORT BOLSTERS THEIR CASE
THE REPORT
WHAT IT MEANS
Different look for Jefferson
Defending champs Red Sox lose Game 1
O'Connor gets post at William and Mary
Homearama preview
Fuel-efficient cars
LANDSTOWN HIGH STAR PERCY HARVIN
The big attraction
Football fans seek early glimpse of greatness
THE HARVIN TOUCH
Parents mourn boy who died by mauling
Toddler was fearless, full of life, father says

What was I thinking? It's bad enough that the boots seem to hang in mid-air with no tops, but my choice of color for the type doesn't help. Note to self: Never, ever use pink type again.

This package would have been stronger if I had turned this photo into a graphic of sorts, with callouts explaining what it shows and what it means. The entire story could have been told this way, and the presentation would have been more integrated. A missed opportunity.

Are there too many words here? It's important to tell the story in big type, but this seems daunting. I could have dropped the label or the deck over the text. And the lead-in seems too big; I'd go two points smaller the next time.

This looks like a refer to an inside story rather than a short story by itself. I should have used body type for the text and a headline treatment that made it look more like a story. And, in spite of those pesky editors, I still would like this column of short items moved to the right. The page would be better balanced.

Do I really have a dominant package? Where will readers look first? It's a toss-up. The lead is bolstered by the bold headline, but the football story has the largest image. I could have given the lead another inch in depth on the page. That, along with integrating the photo into a graphic, would have left no question what the most important story of the day was.

These promos look crowded and a bit overwhelming. Will anyone read this much text? I should have dropped one of these items, which would have given me more space for the nickel story, and played up the first item more.

This would have been an opportunity to tell readers when and where the star will play his next game. A rare chance to look ahead and offer useful information, and I blew it by focusing only on his accomplishments. But there's always tomorrow....

A version of this case study first appeared in Update, a publication of the Society for News Design.

MAKING STORIES FIT

No matter how hard you try, no matter how carefully you plan, no matter how drool-proof your layouts seem, stories have a habit of coming up short. Or long. So what do you do?

Once a page is assembled, minor tweaking is easy. Major repairs, however, are tricky and time-consuming. You may need to back up and re-dummy a story or two. But first, find out what went wrong. Ask yourself:

◆ **Was there a planning problem?** Did someone change a story's length? Did someone swap or re-crop photos? Were ads sized wrong? Omitted? Killed? Or:

◆ **Was there a production problem?** Were text and photos correctly placed? Headlines correctly sized? Are all elements — bylines, cutlines, refers, logos, liftout quotes — where they're supposed to be?

If a story is close to fitting — say, within a few inches — try some of these options, either while you're designing the page or after it's assembled:

MORE ON ▶

◆ **Liftout quotes:** *Some basic styles and guidelines.....* **148**

◆ **Decks:** *Styles and guidelines for sizing and dummying ....* **150**

IF A STORY TURNS OUT TOO LONG

◆ **Trim the text.** As a rule of thumb, stories are usually cuttable by 10%. For instance, a 10-inch story can usually lose an inch without serious damage; a 30-inch story can lose a few inches (and your readers may actually thank you).

◆ **Trim a photo.** Shave a few picas off the top or bottom, if the image allows it. Or, if necessary, re-size the photo so you can crop more tightly.

◆ **Trim an adjacent story.** If you find that a story is trimmed to the max, try tightening the one above or below it.

◆ **Drop a line from the headline.** But be careful — short headlines that make no sense can doom an entire story (see chart, page 29).

◆ **Move an ad,** either into another column or onto another page.

IF A STORY TURNS OUT TOO SHORT

◆ **Add more text.** If material was trimmed from a story, add it back. Or if you have time, break out a small sidebar that highlights key points or tells readers where to go for more information.

◆ **Enlarge a photo.** Crop the depth more loosely. Or size it a column larger.

◆ **Add a mug shot.** But be sure it's someone *relevant* to the story.

◆ **Add a liftout quote.** Find a meaningful remark that will attract readers. And follow our advice at right.

◆ **Add another line of headline.** Or better yet, expand the decks on those long and medium-sized stories.

◆ **Add some air between paragraphs.** This old composing-room trick lets you add 1 to 4 points of extra leading between the final paragraphs of a story. But go easy: If you overdo it, those paragraphs begin to float apart.

◆ **Add a filler story.** Keep a selection of optional 1- or 2-inch stories handy to drop in as needed.

◆ **Add a house ad.** Create small promos for your paper. Have them available in a variety of widths and depths.

◆ **Move an ad.** If permissible, import one from another column or page.

> *"If you add a liftout quote, find one that's provocative and enticing. You can even add extra white space below (like we're doing here) to help you fill deeper holes."*

In addition to these quick fixes, there are two more techniques — using bastard measures and jumping stories — that are a bit more complicated.

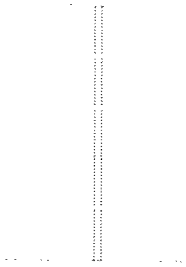
MAKING STORIES FIT

NON-STANDARD (BASTARD) MEASURES

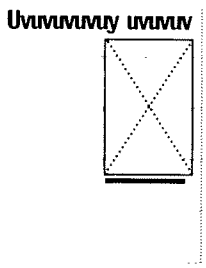
Most of the time, photos fit fine into standard column widths. But on some pages, they're just too small in one column measure — and just too big in another.

At times like these, bastard measures can be the answer — especially on feature pages, where photos predominate.

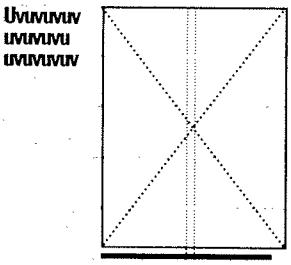
Take this column of text you're reading right now, for instance. Most text in this book is set 29 picas wide. But to maintain the best possible proportions for those four examples at right, we've narrowed this leg of text, running it in a bastard width — 9 picas — alongside the illustrations.



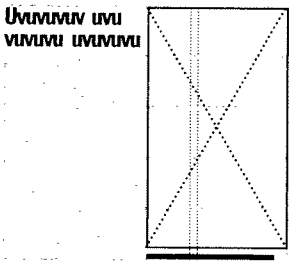
1 *Suppose you're dummying a 6-inch story with a mug. You need to fill this space that's 3 columns wide, 5 inches deep. What's your best option?*



2 *With a 1-column mug, the story fits in 2 legs, leaving a column empty. (A 2-line headline would force text into that third leg but wouldn't fill it.)*



3 *You could try running the mug 2 columns wide, but it wastes way too much space. Only 3½ inches of text will fit into that left-hand column.*



4 *The solution? Running 2 bastard legs in place of the usual 3. The text is 4 inches deep, but it's half-again as wide as a 1-column leg — so it fits.*

MORE ON ▶

- **Jump headlines:** *Guidelines for making jump stories effective*..... **158**
- **Page grids:** *How a better grid might let you size photos with more flexibility*..... **104**

JUMPING STORIES

There will be times — so many, many times — when you'll need to fit a 30-inch story into a 10-inch hole. When that happens, you can either:

- Cut 20 inches from the story (lots of luck), or
- Start the story on one page and finish it on another.

When stories runneth over like that, they're called *jumps*. Jumps are controversial. Many editors hate them. Many readers hate them, too, or worse: they ignore them. But designers love them, because they give us the freedom to stretch and slice stories in otherwise unimaginable ways.

(That age-old journalistic question — "Do readers actually follow stories that jump?" — has yet to be answered definitively. My own hunch? If a story's engrossing enough, readers will follow it *anywhere*. Otherwise, they'll use the jump as an excuse to bail out.)

When you jump a story:

- **Make it worth the reader's while.** It's pointless — and annoying — to jump just a few short paragraphs at the end of a story. Jump *at least* 6 inches of text, unless the story is simply uncuttable and there's no other option.
- **Start the story solidly**, with *at least* 4 inches of text, before forcing it to jump. Otherwise, the story may look too insignificant to bother reading.
- **Jump stories to the same place** whenever possible. Readers will tolerate jumps more forgivingly once they're trained to always turn to the back page, the top of Page 2, the bottom of Page 3, etc.
- **Jump stories once** — and once only. You'll lose or confuse too many readers if you jump a few inches to Page 2, then snake a little more text along Page 3

Please turn to **JUMPS, Page 158** ▶

INSIDE PAGES

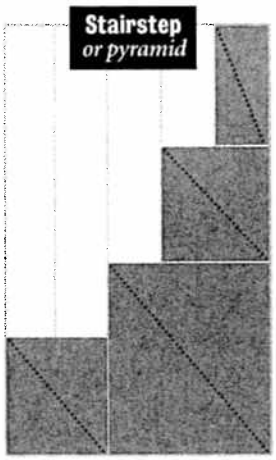
ADS: THREAT OR MENACE?

News stories exist to inform readers. Ads exist to make money for publishers. Can you guess which is more important?

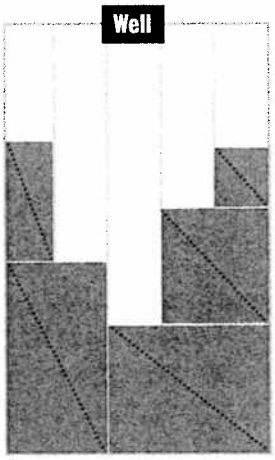
Right. *Ads.*

The big difference between a front page and an inside page is that, on inside pages, you coexist with a loud, pushy heap of boxes — ads — stacked upward from the bottom. Now, some stacks look better than others. But whatever format they use, ad stacks are dummied onto pages *before* the news is — and thus dictate the shape of the news hole you're left with.

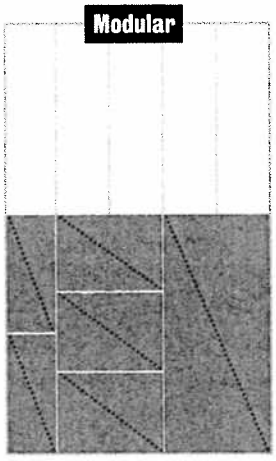
Today, these three formats are most often used for dummying ads:



This traditional format lets every ad touch news copy, which is important to many advertisers. But for editors, it creates ugly-looking news holes. It also creates a pyramid effect on facing pages.



As ads stack up on both sides of the page, a well forms in the middle — hence the name. Like stairstepped ads, wells can get ugly. Designers have been known to call them "Ad Stacks From Hell."



Looks better, doesn't it? By stacking ads in modular blocks, pages look more orderly and attractive, and readership actually improves. This solution may become more common in the future.

To designate ads on page dummies, designers often draw diagonal lines, like those shown here, from the top-left to the bottom-right corner of each ad.

As you can imagine, those two old-fashioned ad configurations — stairstep and well — offer tough challenges for page designers. What's the best way to squeeze stories into those oddly shaped spaces? Here's some advice:

GUIDELINES FOR AD LAYDOWN

Many pages are doomed to ugliness before you even start designing. That's because the ad staff and the newsroom aren't communicating. As a result, ad laydowns become unmanageable, forcing you to waste precious time trying to overcome unnecessary obstacles.

To avoid headaches, work with the ad staff to:

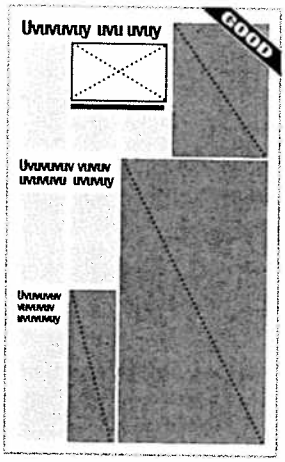
- **Use modular ad formats.** Snaking stories around steeply stairstepped ads punishes both readers and advertisers. Square off ads whenever possible.
- **Use house ads** to smooth out any small, awkward holes.
- **Establish guidelines for key pages.** Negotiate dependable news holes where you need them most. Reach an agreement that Page 2 will always be open, for instance, or that Page 3's left-hand column is off-limits to ads.
- **Establish limits.** If ads are stacked too high — say, an inch from the top of the page — dummying even the simplest headline and story is impossible. Ideally, ads should either stack clear to the top or start at least 2 inches down.
- **Get permission to move ads.** Ad positions aren't etched in stone. Reserve the right to move ads if necessary. Just don't abuse the privilege.

INSIDE PAGES

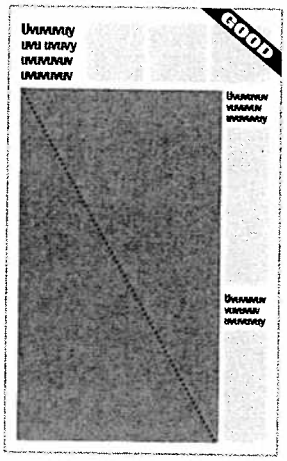
GUIDELINES FOR DESIGNING INSIDE PAGES

◆ **Work with the ad stacks.** Yes, it's best to dummy stories into rectangles, but on pages crowded with ads, that may not work. Doglegging text is common on inside pages, and it's often your only option.

Before you begin dummying, explore how best to subdivide each page. Work with the ads to block out clean, modular story segments. Start at the bottom, if necessary. Or try working backward from an awkward corner. Sometimes you can smooth things out by stretching one wide story atop an uneven stack of small ads. But wherever possible, square off stories along the edges of ads.



As these ads stairstep down the page, stories square off alongside. You may need to cut some text to create these modular shapes, but the page will be more readable than one full of doglegs.

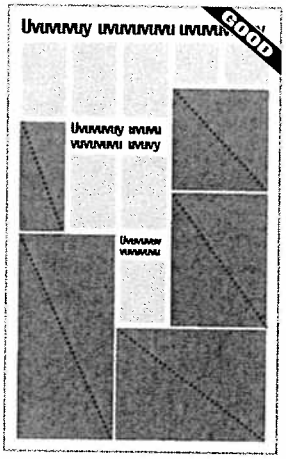


With a banner headline, that top story would have looked shallow and awkward. But with a sidesaddle head, the elements fit together better. Using bastard measures (or even boxing that top story) is optional.

◆ **Use alternative headline treatments.** On pages where ads crowd right to the top, you may barely have enough depth for a headline and an inch of text. That's where sidesaddle headlines come in handy (see the example at left).

Another option: Use raw-wrap headlines to dummy two stories side by side at the top of a crowded page.

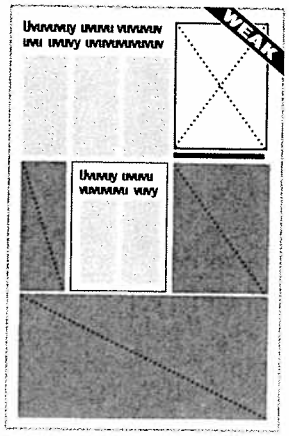
◆ **Give every page a dominant element.** On crowded pages with tiny news holes, this may be impossible. And on other tight pages, even squeezing in a small photo may be difficult. But try to anchor each page with a strong image or a solid story. Don't just crowbar cluttered gray clumps of copy together. (See example at right.)



The more crowded the page, the less necessary (and more difficult) it is to add photos. Note how this page plays up one dominant story — and how slight doglegs around ads are not a problem.

◆ **Avoid dummying photos or boxed stories near ads.** Ads are boxes. Photos are boxes. And readers can't always tell one box from another. So unless you want photos and sidebars mistaken for ads, always keep a little text between the two (see example below).

Keep headlines away from ads, too. This is difficult to do, but remember that a headline butting into the headline *on an ad* can look just as clumsy as one that butts into another story's headline.

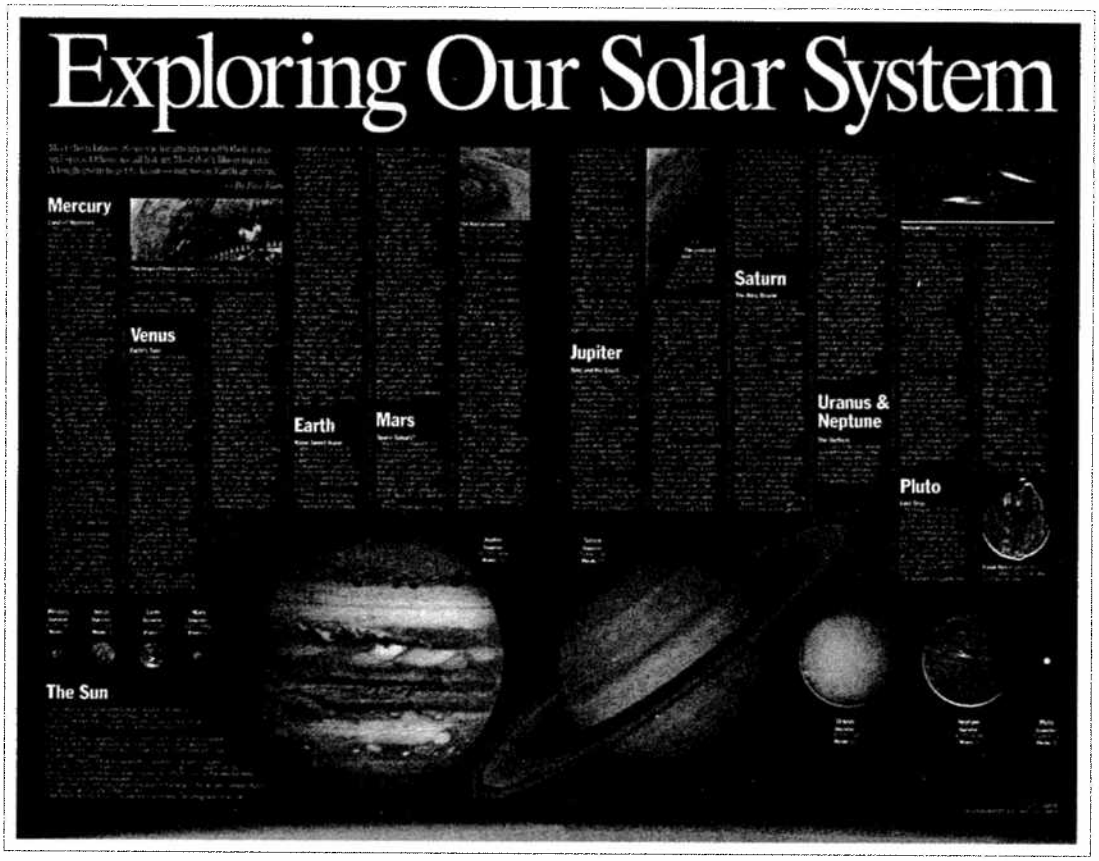


Two problems here: That top photo sits on an ad and could easily be mistaken for an ad itself. In the middle of the page, that boxed story is sandwiched between ads — and, like the photo, seems to look like another ad.

◆ **Save good stories for pages with good news holes.** Instead of constantly dummying your best stories and photos around nasty ad stacks, can you pour in flexible material like calendar listings? Briefs? Obituaries? Many papers successfully relegate text-heavy material to pages where ads are ugliest.

Consider an ad laydown strategy that alternates open pages with tight ones – or provides reasonably loose news holes in key positions throughout the paper. That way, you don't have to wrestle with ads on every page; you can satisfy your advertisers' desires to locate near strong news material while still giving yourself room to design a few attractive pages.

DOUBLE TRUCKS



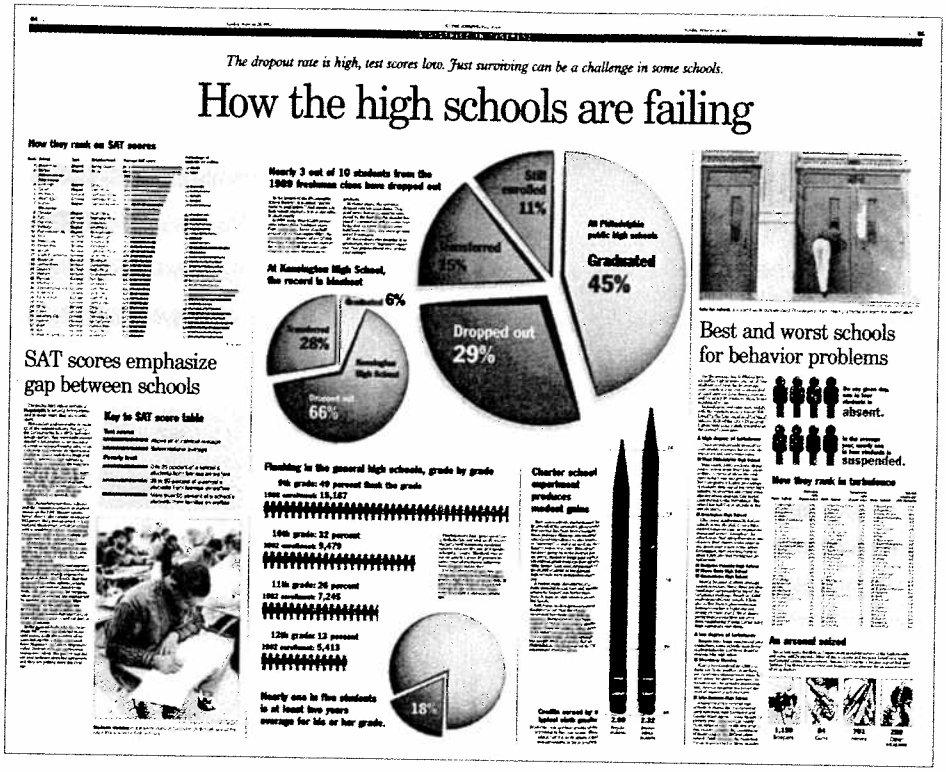
The Philadelphia Inquirer has created consistently brilliant examples of double-truck design. We'll look at three examples here and on the next page. To mark astronaut John Glenn's return to space in 1998, the Inquirer created a special section that looked at past and future missions, offered guides to books and museums, and provided this double-truck guide to the planets.

In 1995, a fire killed 23 primates at the Philadelphia Zoo. So when the zoo opened its new primate house in 1999, the Inquirer produced a special supplement full of monkey stories, Web-site guides, maps of the new exhibits, comparisons of humans and apes — and this double-truck centerpiece, a collection of primate profiles introducing 11 of the zoo's new inhabitants to readers.

The Philadelphia Inquirer
Going Ape!
Inside this section:
A guide to the Philadelphia Zoo's new primate house
Exploring our passion for primates

DOUBLE TRUCKS

This double-truck spread from The Philadelphia Inquirer was part of a special report examining problems in the city's schools. Note how the design flows right across the central gutter. Note, too, how well balanced and proportioned the artwork and text are. Most importantly, note how well planned this entire package is. Instead of three or four 20-inch stories, this spread uses charts, graphs and short lists to get its information across.


The dropout rate is high, test scores low. Just surviving can be a challenge in some schools.
How the high schools are failing
SAT scores emphasize gap between schools
Best and worst schools for behavior problems
Graduated 45%
Dropped out 29%
Transferred 15%
Still enrolled 11%
Graduated 6%
Transferred 28%
Dropped out 66%
18%

MORE ON ▸

- **Double-truck design:** *How student papers avoid messy and predictable pages* ..**104**

When two facing pages print across the gutter on one sheet of newsprint — say, the two pages in the center of a section — it's called a *double truck.* Double trucks are rare in broadsheets, but popular in tabloids. They'll work best if you:

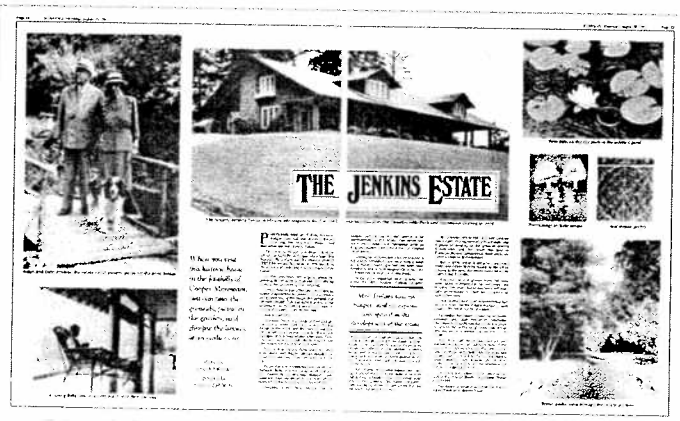
◆ **Clear off all ads.** Make it one big, modular, editorial block. Any ads will either intrude, get buried or be mistaken for editorial matter.

◆ **Treat both pages as one horizontal unit.** Ignore the gutter between pages. Spread your elements from left to right in a balanced, orderly way. Keep the flow of text clean. Anchor the design with a bold headline and strong dominant photo.

◆ **Save them for special occasions.** Readers expect these packages to be special, so don't let them down. Save double trucks for news features, infographics, photo layouts or major events. Add color and graphic effects. Think big. Have fun.

DESIGNING TWO FACING PAGES

You can also apply special treatment to two facing pages anywhere in the paper. As with actual double trucks, it's important to treat facing pages as one wide unit. If you're careful, you can even run elements across the central gutter, but photos and illustrations align more successfully than headlines or text (see example, right). Readers are generally pretty tolerant, but don't push your luck.



This photo spread from The Times (Beaverton, Ore.) ran on two facing pages — not a true double truck. We've printed it here the way many readers saw it: with the pages slightly out of alignment and a gutter opening up through the lead photo and headline. That's a problem, but not a serious one if you position the columns of text carefully.

BAD JUXTAPOSITIONS

As newspaper designer Phil Nesbitt once said: People and puppies must both be trained to use a newspaper.

In olden days, readers were trained to read newspapers *vertically* — and since every story on every page ran vertically, readers were rarely confused about which photo went with which story.

Today, however, stories run in vertical and horizontal modules that change from page to page. And on every page — with every *story* — we expect our readers to instantly deduce which photo connects to which text.

Ax-wielding lunatic escapes from asylum
By ROBIN FOX
Special writer, The Bugle Review
Non equidem insector delendave carmina Livi esse reor, memini.
Vice president Cheney visits new grandchild
By ROBIN FOX
Special writer The Bugle Review
Non equidem insector dela ndave carmina Livi ess mundi.
Gorilla mom gives birth at city zoo
Killer gorilla goes bananas, trashes tire store
By ROBIN FOX
Special writer The Bugle Review

We don't always make their choices easy. (In the example at right, is Cheney the escaped lunatic? Is that gorilla photo a portrait of Cheney's new grandchild?) So it's especially important to analyze every page design as objectively as you can, to determine:

- if a photo sits at the intersection of two stories in a way that confuses or misdirects the reader.
- if two stories — or their headlines — seem inappropriate together on the same page. (Those two ape stories in the example above will seem related to many readers, thus creating a false connection.)
- if an advertisement seems to comment upon a neighboring news story.

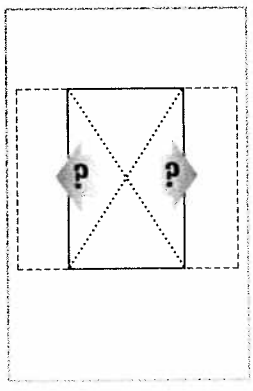
It's easy to embarrass yourself, your readers and the subjects of your stories (both apes *and* humans) by dubious dummying. When in doubt, either *move it* or *box it* — whatever it takes to make your design perfectly clear.

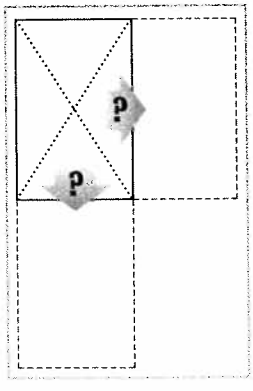
THE PROBLEM: OVERLAPPING MODULES

To avoid blunders like that example above, beware of modules that seem to overlap, whether horizontally (on both sides of a photo) or both vertically *and* horizontally (beside and below a photo):

Horizontally

Two stories, one photo — and the reader must guess where the photo belongs. To fix:
- *Box or screen one of the stories;*
- *Divide them with a column rule; or*
- *Run a large headline across the top of the photo and its text.*





Horizontally and vertically

Dummying photos into corner intersections can be dangerous. To avoid confusion:
- *Box or screen one of the stories;*
- *Make sure any story below an unrelated photo is at least one column wider or narrower.*

RULES OF THUMB

On this page, we've collected the key design principles presented in this book. Use this list as a quick reference; the numbers running along the right margin show pages where you can find more information.

LAYOUT & DESIGN

- All stories should be shaped like rectangles. Pages should consist of rectangles stacked together. **[48]**
- Avoid placing any graphic element in the middle of a leg of type. **[50, 149]**
- Avoid placing art at the bottom of a leg of type. **[50]**
- Text that wraps below a photo should be at least one inch deep. **[51]**
- In vertical layouts, stack elements in this order: *photo, cutline, headline, text.* **[50]**
- Every page should have a dominant piece of art. **[60]**
- A well-designed page is usually at least one-third art. **[78]**
- Avoid dummying a photo directly on top of an ad. **[99]**
- Avoid boxing stories just to keep headlines from butting; it's best to box stories only if they're special or different. **[80]**

TEXT

- The optimum depth for legs of text is from 2 to 10 inches. **[31]**
- Avoid dummying legs of text more than 20 picas wide, or narrower than 10 picas. **[31]**
- Use italics, boldface, reverses or any other special effects in small doses. **[211]**
- Type smaller than 8 point is difficult to read. Use small type sparingly, and avoid printing it behind a screen. **[211]**

HEADLINES

- Every story must have a headline.
- Headlines get smaller as you move down the page. Smaller stories get smaller headlines. **[29]**
- 5-10 words is optimum for most headlines. **[29]**
- Never allow an art element to come between the headline and the start of a news story. **[55]**
- Don't butt headlines. If you must, run the left headline several counts short, then vary their sizes and the number of lines. **[79]**
- Writing headlines: Avoid stilted wording, jargon, omitted verbs, bad splits; write in the present tense. **[27]**

PHOTOS

- Shoot photos of *real* people doing *real* things. **[110, 117]**
- Directional photos should face the text they accompany. **[54, 55]**
- When in doubt, run one big photo instead of two small ones. **[61]**
- When using two or more photos, make one dominant — that is, substantially bigger than any competing photo. **[61, 85]**
- Try to vary the shapes and sizes of all photos (as well as stories) on a page. **[84]**

CUTLINES

- To avoid confusion, run one cutline per photo; each cutline should touch the photo it describes. **[35, 131]**
- When cutlines run beside photos, they should be at least 6 picas wide. **[35]**
- When cutlines run below photos, square them off as evenly as possible on both sides of the photo. They should not extend beyond either edge of the photo. **[35]**
- Avoid widows in any cutline more than one line deep. **[35]**

JUMPS

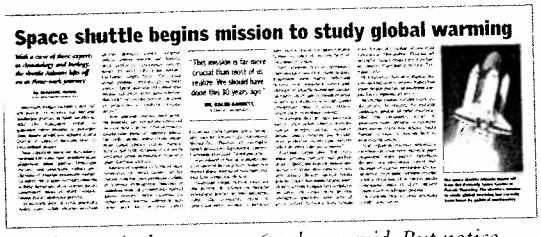
- Run at least 4 inches of a story before you jump it. **[97]**
- Jump at least 6 inches of a story (to make it worth the reader's effort). **[97]**
- Jump stories once and once only. Whenever possible, jump to the same place. **[97]**

TROUBLESHOOTING

Quick answers to questions frequently asked by designers perplexed about page design:

Q: What are the best grids for newspapers to use? And once you choose a grid, do you have to use it everywhere — or can grids vary from page to page?

For years, newspapers have been using the same dull grids: 6-column grids for broadsheets, 5-column grids for tabs. That's usually because the standard 1-column ad is about 2 inches wide, and news columns are sized to accommodate ads. Which is fine for pages with ads. But what about when ads *aren't* a factor — on open pages, or inside pages above the ad stacks? Wouldn't it be nice to have more flexibility, more options for column widths? (See examples at left.)



Here's a typical story on a 6-column grid. But notice how gray it is, and how small that 1-column photo is. What if you want more flexibility, more design options?

If you run the photo 2 columns wide, it takes up a lot more space and may not always fit into that shape. What if we could run that photo 1½ columns wide instead?

On a 12-column grid — instead of 6 — we have twice as many options: for the photo size, the deck, the cutline. (Note the liftout quote. Will it work positioned there?)

So . . . want to explore new grid options? Take a typical page from a recent issue of your paper and rebuild it on an upgraded grid. If you're a tab, try 7, 8 or 9 columns. If you're a broadsheet, try 9, 10, 11 or 12. Resize the art, reflow the text, rewrite the cutlines and headlines, and see if you discover an advantage — visually, typographically, journalistically — to fitting your stories onto a different grid.

Two warnings, however:

◆ An oft-quoted typographic adage suggests that the optimum width for standard text is a column that's *an alphabet and a half* wide:

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyzabcdefghijklm

The optimum column width for 9-point Nimrod, shown here, works out to be 15p6.

You can certainly put narrower legs to use for cutlines, liftout quotes, decks, etc. But legs skinnier than 5 picas wide are tough to pour type into. And remember, the narrower the leg, the more necessary smaller, condensed type becomes.

◆ If you're designing a tab, you may want to avoid a 6-column grid; if you're designing a broadsheet, beware the 7-column grid. Both force columns of text to be uncomfortably narrow, resulting in pages that look messy and stripey.

And yes, you can mix grids within a newspaper. For example, you could design all your open pages on a 9-column grid — but on most inside pages, when that grid won't accommodate standard ad sizes, you could revert to a simpler grid using wider columns. No one but you will ever know (or care).

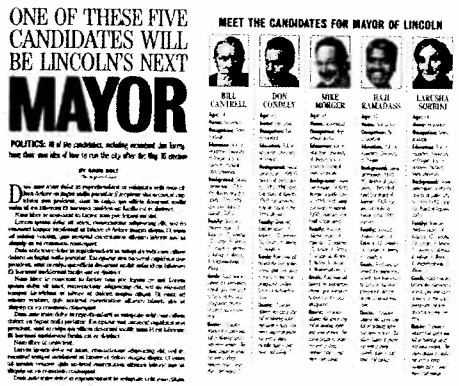
Q: At our school paper, we design a special double-truck spread each issue. How can we make it look better?

It's time for GRADUATION
Class of 2001 looks back on years of struggle, reward, fun
Graduating ceremonies keep some traditions but offer new changes
Last year's graduating class offers words of wisdom for college-bound seniors
Departing seniors look back on memories of friends, laughter and sad emotions

◆ *Upgrade your grid.* If ever a design situation called for a special grid, it's a double truck. Remember: More columns mean more design options. And the biggest problem with most double trucks is the way they end up looking like the example at right: a big headline; four 15-inch stories, each shoved into a corner; random art scattered to fill the holes.

◆ *Plan your package.* Upgrade your reporting AND your design by collaborating in advance to produce a package with appealing sidebars. See page 188 for more on this.

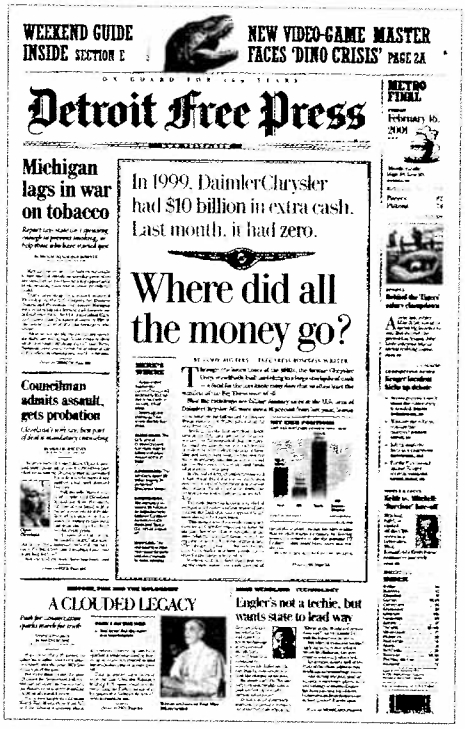
TROUBLESHOOTING



Q: Is it possible to design a page without a big, dominant photo?

Sure. That old *every-page-must-have-a-dominant-photo* rule resulted from years of chaotic pages swimming in smallish photos. Nobody likes messy page designs — especially photographers, who love to see their best photos anchoring big stories. (In fact, too often the downside of letting photographers design pages is that, as the photos get bigger, the story count dwindles, and the pace of the pages slows to a crawl.)

BUT if you're careful and smart, you can avoid chaos and still design successful pages without big photos. You can group small photos into a central cluster. You can anchor the page with an infographics package (as in the example at left). You can run big headlines as dominant art (as in the terrific page at right — notice, by the way, how small all its images actually are). But that basic principle remains: Without *something* to anchor it, a busy page easily becomes chaotic.


WEEKEND GUIDE INSIDE SECTION E
NEW VIDEO-GAME MASTER FACES 'DINO CRISIS' PAGE 2A
Detroit Free Press
Michigan lags in war on tobacco
In 1999, DaimlerChrysler had $10 billion in extra cash. Last month, it had zero.
Where did all the money go?
Councilman admits assault, gets probation
A CLOUDED LEGACY
Engler's not a techie, but wants state to lead way

4 'Saucers' Shown in Coast Guard Photo
MOTHER DIES IN HOME FIRE
Citizen-News
Youth With Rifle Held in Sniper Hunt
NEWS BRIEFS
Photo Shows 4 Saucers in V-Formation
Ike Can Crack The Solid South, Says Sen. Long

Q: We always run five stories on Page One. Is there some rule that dicates how many stories should run on a typical front page?

It changes over time. Most broadsheet newspapers typically run four, five or six stories on Page One; a half a century ago, they ran *dozens* (see example at left). Newsy tabloids may run three or four cover stories; other tabs prefer single-topic covers, like magazines.

So what's your paper's personality? Newsy, with lots of traffic? Stylish and artsy, with dramatic photos and big type? It's a question of style. Staffing. Budget. Newshole. Reader preference.

The best answer: Stay flexible. Avoid falling into a rut where every issue looks the same. Page-design monotony will bore you *and* your readers. Consider mixing up the story count from issue to issue, page to page, letting the news — not newsroom habit — dictate the pace.

Q: I've noticed a lot of papers use rules between stories. Is that a good idea? Or is it cheating?

IRS DIRECTOR PROPOSES LAW TO REDUCE TAX FRAUD
Environmental policy 'too timid,' Gore says
CONGRESS DEADLOCKED ON MILITARY PENSION PLAN
Powell orders Kosovo troops to return home

For centuries, newspapers used rules (horizontal and vertical lines) to separate stories. Back in the '60s and '70s, rule-less gutters became popular, but nowadays rules are back. And most of the best-designed papers use them.

Advantages: Rules organize stories and pages into neat stacks. They even let you get away with butting headlines and colliding art elements, up to a point (see right).

Disadvantages: When drawn down the middle of a narrow gutter, rules can crowd the text beside it. And if you widen the gutter to alleviate the crowding, sliding stories slightly sideways, your page grid can look wonky and unaligned. Rules work best with wider gutters.

EXERCISES

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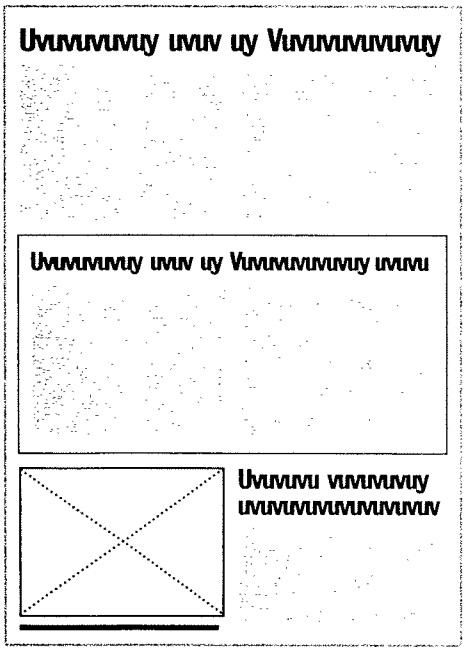
1 You need to dummy text in a box that's 40 picas wide. How wide will each leg be if there are 4 legs? If there are 3 legs? If there are 2 legs?

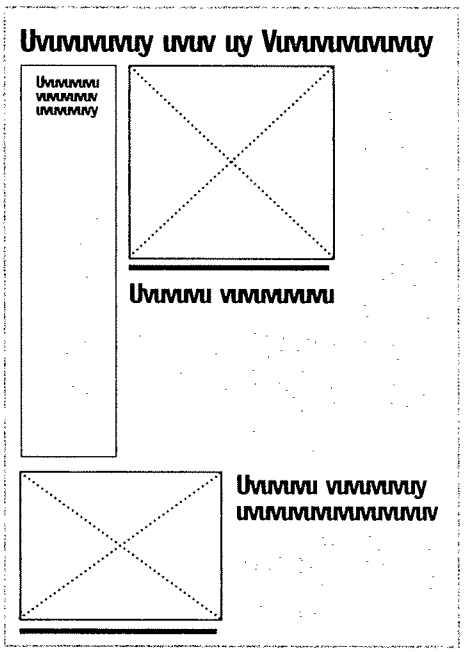
2 You're laying out an inside page in a 5-column format. The ads stack up pretty high; your available space for news is 6 inches deep and the full page (5 columns) across. You need to dummy two stories in that space: one 15 inches long, the other 10 inches. Neither has art. You can trim one inch out of either story, if necessary — but no more. What are your best design options?

3 There are several things wrong with each of these three page designs. Like what, for instance?

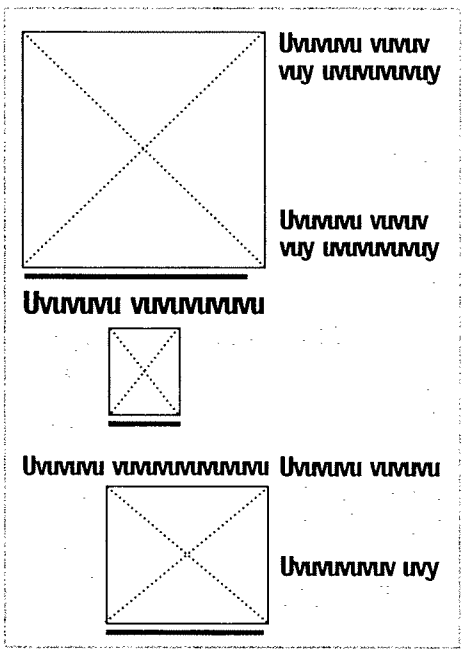
A



B

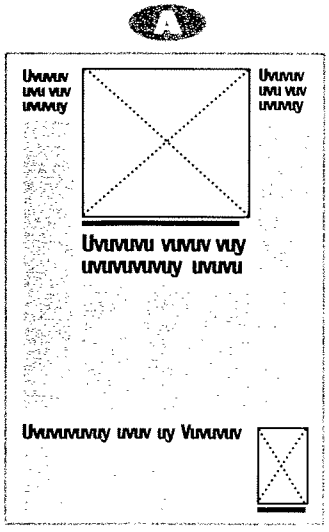


C

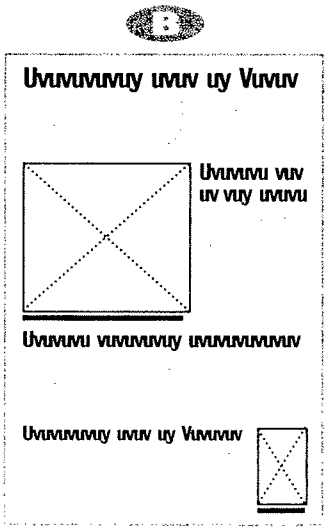


4 The four layouts below all use the same story elements. Which one of the four layouts is the best, and why?

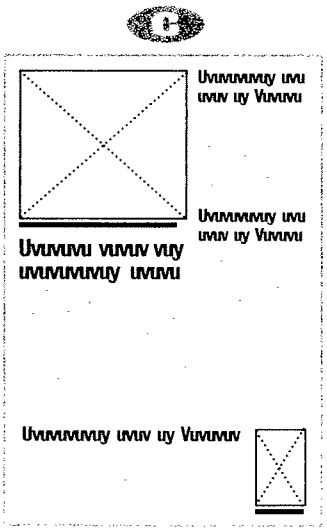
A



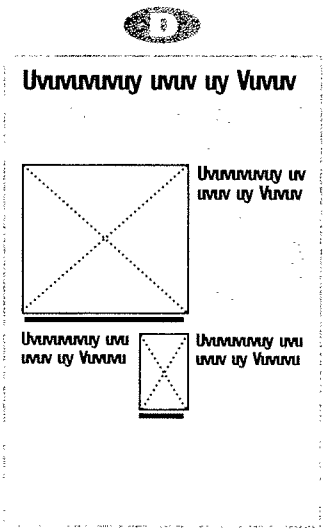
B



C



D



EXERCISES

Soviet women feel left out

Reagan's aptitude questioned

Stock market rises to 2,100.64

FBI disciplines six employees

Hyundai picks Portland as principal port

The South Korean automaker will be funneling up to 250,000 cars a year through its planned dock near Kelley Point Park

By BILL MacKENZIE

CAMPAIGN '88

3 hijackers, 1 hostage die in shootout after pope's visit

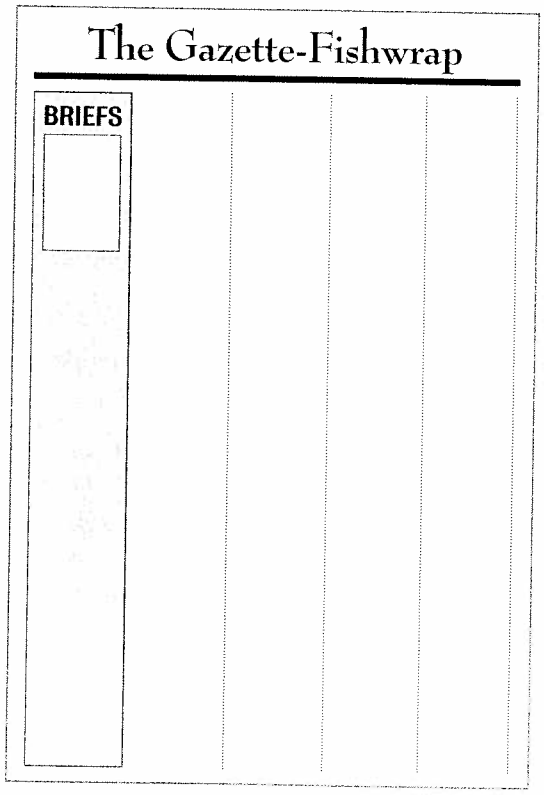
Rebels holding a church bus full of children and nuns launch a gunbattle with South African commandos

'Human mouse' portends breakthroughs in medicine

Scientists give mice human immune systems that make them promising stand-ins for drug research

INDEX

5 When the layout above ran in the newspaper, some editors complained that the Campaign '88 promo box was positioned poorly. It appears as if it's part of the Hyundai story to its left. How would you redesign this part of the page to avoid that problem, using the sizes shown here?



6 At left is Page One of a typical tabloid. It uses a 5-column format, and that gray left-hand column is reserved for news briefs.

Design this page to include the following three elements:

- A 10-inch lead story with a good horizontal photo;
- An 8-inch story with a horizontal photo; and
- A 4-inch bright (an upbeat, offbeat feature).

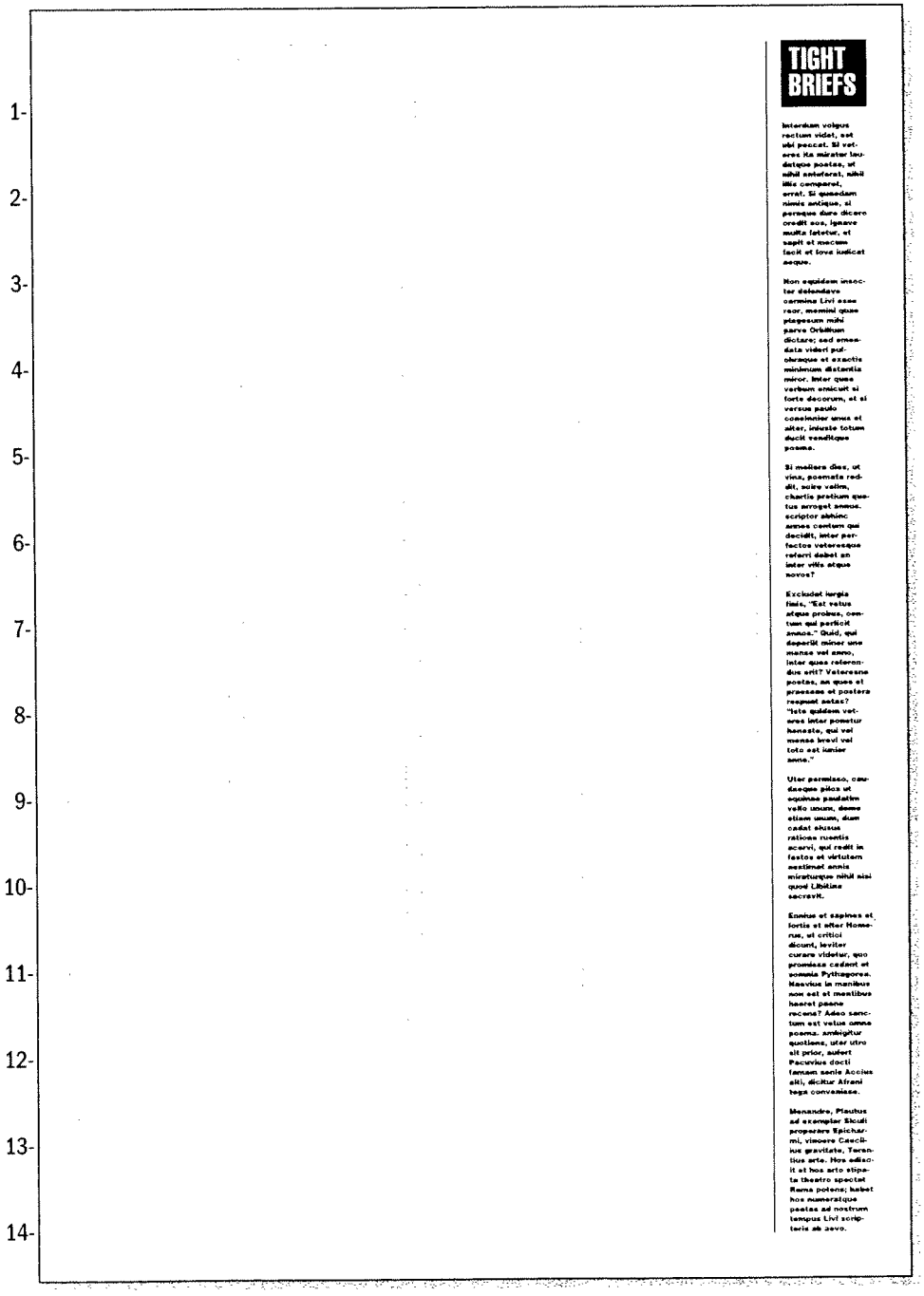
EXERCISES

7 Here's an inside page for a tabloid. Down the right side, there's a column of news briefs. Draw a dummy that shows how you'd design this page with the following elements:

- A lead story — about 15 inches long, but cuttable* — that uses a strong, deep vertical photo;
- A secondary story — about 12 inches long, but cuttable — with a mug shot;
- A short, bright feature story — about 4 inches long.

Note: There are two somewhat different, but acceptable, solutions for this page. Try your best to figure out both options.

* By "cuttable," we're talking a couple of inches, max. Nothing too drastic.



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The McGraw-Hill Companies

McGraw-Hill Higher Education

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This book is printed on acid-free paper.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 QPD/QPD 0 9 8 7

ISBN: 978-0-07-299669-2
MHID: 0-07-299669-2

Publisher: *Frank Mortimer*
Sponsoring Editor: *Suzanne Earth*
Editorial Assistant: *Erika Lake*
Developmental Editor: *Craig Leonard*
Marketing Manager: *Leslie Oberhuber*
Interior and Cover Designer: *Tim Harrower*
Production Editor: *Brett Coker*
Manager, Photo Research: *Brian J. Pecko*
Production Supervisor: *Tandra Jorgensen*
Printing: *Quebecor World, Inc.*

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Harrower, Tim.
The newspaper designer's handbook / written & designed by Tim Harrower.—6th ed.
p. cm.
Includes index.
ISBN-13: 978-0-07-299669-2 (acid-free paper)
ISBN-10: 0-07-299669-2 (acid-free paper) 1. Newspaper layout and typography I. Title
Z253.5.H27 2007
686.2'252—dc22

2007018880

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